

# DN disabilitynow

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## Shady dealing

Salesmen who sell assistive products to older and disabled people are often guilty of "sharp practices", according to a new report.

Many disabled people are pressured into buying expensive products, such as powered scooters, beds and chairs, that they don't need.

Others are offered dramatic price reductions, or receive poor demonstrations or sub-standard after-sales service.

The Ricability report was commissioned by Age Concern, which is now seeking a meeting with the Office of Fair Trading and the government.

Recommendations include more transparent pricing, strengthening industry codes of practice, promoting independent advice and government legislation to protect consumers.

Sarah Lepak, of the British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA), which represents some companies in the industry, said:

"I can't say the report surprised us, because of the anecdotal evidence we have received over time. What is disturbing is that people consider that type of practice suitable when dealing with elderly and disabled people."

Helena Herklots, head of policy for Age Concern, said: "What I think it shows is that there is a minority of companies that do have poor selling practices and that it is something we do need to tackle."

The BHTA has set up a voluntary registration scheme for salesmen, which it hopes will improve ethical behaviour.

It is also carrying out government-funded research\*\* to decide whether an independent ombudsman is needed to resolve complaints.

The report includes a string

of disturbing case studies. In one, a disabled man in his 80s was sold an over-priced riser recliner chair he didn't need.

In another, a woman with severe arthritis was sold a scooter she was not strong enough to use. And an elderly couple with arthritis were sold two adjustable beds after a "very persistent" salesman stayed in their home for four hours.

For advice, contact: the Disabled Living Foundation, tel: 0845 1309177; the Disabled Living Centres Council, tel: 0161 8341044; Age Concern, tel: 0800 009966; or your local trading standards office.

\*Sharp Selling Practices, £10, from Age Concern, tel: 020 87657429.

\*\*Call BHTA if you have a similar problem, tel: 01732 458868.

DONALD MIRALLE/GETTY IMAGES



Snow go: Sit Skier, Russell Docker, one of Britain's two athletes to go to the Winter Paralympics in Salt Lake City, took to the slopes in March, with a disappointing performance (see page 6).

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## Sweet smells

The charity Sense has created the UK's first mobile sensory garden on the top floor of a double-decker bus. DN's front cover for April shows Emma Hancock, who is deaf and almost blind, enjoying the garden's blooms.

The garden was launched in London, in March, and will tour the country before being transplanted to a permanent setting at a Sense residential home in Leeds.

Tony Best, chief executive of Sense, says: "It will be a stimulating environment that will bring a great deal of pleasure."

## No stopping us



Support for DN's winter fuel payment campaign keeps growing. Over 1,600 severely disabled people have filled in the survey calling for the payment, and 165 MPs have now signed Roger Berry's early day motion, number 289. Keep the pressure up on your MP to sign. See also page 18.

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FRONT COVER: EMMA HANCOCK, WHO IS DEAF AND ALMOST BLIND, POSES WITH FLOWERS DESTINED FOR SENSE AND ICI'S GARDEN ON WHEEL

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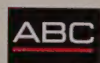
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# Shutdown

A charity owned factory supported by the Queen Mother is to close amid accusations that disabled staff were let down.

The Leatherhead based factory, which employs 42 disabled people and is run by the Queen Elizabeth Foundation (QEF), is to close on 31 May.

The factory faced a projected deficit of £365,000 by the end of the financial year ending April 2002. The charity blamed government underfunding.

But staff say that they have been let down by the QEF. Factory general manager David Williams said he had not been allowed to reappoint a sales manager in 2000, while the charity lost £190,000 after a firm which took over its print operation shut down. He said this had been a fiasco.

But Cynthia Robinson, chief executive of the QEF, said:

"This situation has been brought about by the steadily widening gap between government funding and the factory's costs. Government funding has scarcely increased over the last 10 years."

But the foundation itself has faced serious financial problems, bringing in an income of £9.4 million last year with a deficit of £739,000. It planned to halve that in the financial year ending April 2002.

The foundation claimed that the previous sales person had not had a significant impact and it had not wanted to stop the contract with the print firm in case things had improved.

A government spokesperson said it had paid all the money due to the foundation under its contract and it was down to the QEF to explain why things had gone wrong.

## Benefits shock

A benefits change supposed to help severely disabled young people could leave them and their families out of pocket.

From this month, an estimated 6,000 people under the age of 20 will receive incapacity benefit instead of severe disablement allowance and income support.

The change was supposed to mean at least £9 more a week.

But Mike Hurdiss, benefits policy officer for Scope, said many claimants who live with their parents will lose the

advantages of income support.

These could include free school meals, free after-school clubs and free prescriptions.

They might also have to start contributing towards council tax and their parents' rent.

Hurdiss, who has been approached by worried parents, said the change could end up costing them more: "The government needs to act quickly to mitigate some of the effects."

The government was unable to comment on the issue.

CROSSROADS WOMEN'S CENTRE



Sister act: Jacky Powell (left) of the Black Deaf Sistah Group joined the Women of Colour contingent at a Global Women's Strike on 8 March. This called for investment in care, not war.

## Police blunder – again



A disabled woman who asked a police officer why he was parked in a disabled bay outside a supermarket claims he drove off over her toe.

Hertfordshire Police has now become the third force this year to face allegations that officers have misused disabled spaces in supermarket car parks.

Katie Boatwright, from Hertfordshire, who has osteoarthritis and curvature of the spine, claimed the police officer ignored her when she

first questioned him outside the Tesco store.

When she continued to complain, he agreed to move, but allegedly drove off over her toe.

She said: "It hurt. I had problems with my toe before and running over it didn't help matters. I was really upset."

A spokeswoman for Hertfordshire Police said: "We have received a complaint and we are in the process of investigating the allegations."

Meanwhile, an officer from Greater Manchester Police has received a formal warning after

parking her police van in a disabled bay outside an Asda store (DN February 2002).

And a Cardiff police officer has been given advice about his behaviour after being identified as the driver who parked his van in a disabled space outside a Tesco store (DN March 2002).

Both forces have issued memos reminding officers not to use disabled bays except in emergencies.

\* Transport minister Sally Keeble has postponed a meeting with Baywatch campaigners and supermarkets until 10 April.

### In brief

#### Downs on the up

The life expectancy of people with Down's syndrome has almost doubled in less than 20 years, new research finds.

The US study, published in *The Lancet*, also found that having Down's appears to reduce the risk of dying from most cancers by more than 90 per cent.

Between 1982 and 1997, the average age of death of people with Down's increased from 25 to 49 years.

#### New targets for jobs

The government has set targets to ensure that finding jobs for disabled people is a top priority for its new Jobcentre Plus network.

This will begin to replace the Benefits Agency and Employment Service offices from April.

Disabled clients will have a high value in a new points scoring system. The network has been set a national target of gaining 6,656,000 points.

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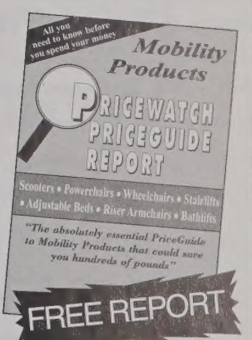
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- have savings or capital of £16,000 or less, **and**
- be resident in the United Kingdom, and entitled to work here, **and**

**Either**, be getting at the date of your application one or more of the following benefits:

- Disability Living Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- War Disablement Pension which includes Constant Attendance Allowance or a mobility supplement
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit which includes Constant Attendance Allowance
- an invalid carriage or any other vehicle provided under the invalid vehicle scheme, or
- one of a range of incapacity or disability benefits at any time in the 26 weeks before your DPTC application, for example, Incapacity Benefit paid at the higher short-term rate or long-term rate or Income Support which includes a Disability Premium or a Higher Pensioner Premium for you.

**Or if**, after a period of sickness, you have to change to work with lower pay or reduce your hours in your current job you can use the Fast-Track route to DPTC.

To apply for this you must:

- have been sick and in receipt of, for example, Statutory Sick Pay, Occupational Sick Pay or Incapacity Benefit paid at the lower short-term rate for 20 weeks or more, **and**
- provide evidence from a doctor that your illness or disability will last for at least a further six months, or the rest of your life, **and**
- on returning to work, be receiving earnings at least 20% less than they were before you had the illness or disability - with a minimum reduction of £15 (gross before tax and National Insurance contributions have been deducted) a week.

**The following example is intended both to explain how the DPTC is calculated, and to give you an idea of how you can benefit.**

**This example assumes that all the main qualifying conditions of DPTC have been met.**

Ron works as a night porter in a hotel. He has had intermittent bouts of depression for some years, but they had been brief and relatively mild so he was able to work through them on medication. Four months ago Ron became severely depressed and had to go to hospital. He has improved, but he agrees with his psychiatrist that he has not fully recovered and that returning to the old pattern of hours could make him much worse. Ron has a wife, who works and takes home £40 a week, and one child aged 7, who is disabled and in receipt of the highest rate care component of Disability Living Allowance. Ron is now working for less than 30 hours a week and his take home pay has reduced to £100. The family also receives Child Benefit.

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	Enhanced disabled child's credit	£41.05	
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	(£140 - £92.90 = £47.10)	-£25.90	
	<b>DPTC payable</b>		<b>£132.40</b>
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	Child Benefit		£15.50
	<b>Total income</b>		<b>£287.90</b>

NB. This example does not include any benefits you may be receiving such as Disability Living Allowance.

To find out more about DPTC and how it can help you phone **DNEU 0845 605 5858** or textphone **0845 608 8844**

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In Northern Ireland call **0845 609 7000** or textphone **0845 607 6078** (lines are open from 7.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday). All calls are charged at local rates. You should also be able to pick up a leaflet about DPTC from your local Tax Offices, Inland Revenue Enquiry Centres and Benefit Offices. Applications are made by post on form DPTC1, which is included in the DPTC application pack.

This advertorial provides guidance only and reflects the position at the time of writing.

**TAX CREDITS  
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# New deal downfall Reefer gladness

A flagship government scheme aimed at getting disabled people jobs had achieved only a third of its targets by January.

Ministers intended that the £120 million New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP), which launched in July, would get 5,000 disabled people on incapacity benefits into work by April. But by January, only 1,554 people found work.

And 769 people got jobs with the help of just two of the 64 agencies providing the scheme.

Many of these agencies provide the service in addition to

other employment projects.

But Ian Charlesworth, managing director of Shaw Trust, which has got 499 people jobs, said: "You can't do it as an add on to other programmes.

"You need dedicated staff, premises, marketing and expertise and empathy with the client group you are dealing with.

"My big problem is people in the Treasury will look at it and say it does not work, so we won't do it."

The other successful agency, Westcountry Training and

Consultancy Services, got jobs for 270 people.

Tim Cooper, business development director at Shaw Trust, feared that the lack of success was due to providers only getting paid if they find people work. This might make some wary of helping clients.

A government spokesperson said: "We did not want to set how they go about things. The whole point of projects like this is to encourage innovation. Therefore comparisons of bald figures are actually fairly meaningless."



Government advisers have called for the relaxation of cannabis laws, giving a boost to campaigners who want it legalised for medicinal use.

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) does not associate cannabis use with serious health problems.

The government-commissioned review recommended that cannabis be downgraded from a class B to a class C drug.

This would mean possession of cannabis would no longer be an arrestable offence, although it would carry a possible

two-year prison sentence.

Professor Sir Michael Rawlins, chair of the ACMD, said: "Cannabis is associated with some risks to health, but the council concludes that these are less than the risks posed by other class B drugs such as amphetamine."

Home Office drugs minister Bob Ainsworth said the government would take the report into account when considering the proposed reclassification of cannabis.

A decision on whether the government will license the drug is not likely until at least 2004.



MOONEY PHOTO

Footy for all: Four teams took part in Middlesex County Football Association's first ever electric wheelchair football competition in March

## Son may have to get the boot

A disabled couple claim they will have to throw out their 18-year-old son or lose £83 a week in benefits.

Emma Rowe, 45, and her husband Colin, 49, who both have multiple sclerosis, said the only alternative was for him to become their carer.

The couple get an £83-a-week Severe Disability Premium (SDP) added to their Income Support. But when their son Sam leaves education, they will no longer receive it.

In a letter to the Rowe's MP, Baroness Hollis of Heigham

advised them that Sam could apply for Invalid Care Allowance (ICA) instead, but even this would pay only £41 a week.

Mrs Rowe said the SDP meets disability-related costs which they could not afford otherwise.

She said: "Without that £83 a week, he really is going to have to become our carer. That is not the future I want for my children. This is destroying me emotionally and physically."

A spokesperson for the government said that benefits other than ICA could be claimed.

## Let us die!

A tetraplegic woman has asked the High Court to order her doctors to turn off the ventilator that is keeping her alive.

The woman, who cannot be named, says doctors have refused to switch it off and allow her to die.

She has been on the ventilator since a blood vessel ruptured in her spine last year, leaving her unable to breathe unaided.

Part of the hearing took place at the woman's hospital bedside, with the pictures relayed to the courtroom via a video-link.

Meanwhile, Diane Pretty, from Luton, who is terminally ill with motor neurone disease, began her final legal bid for the right to be helped to die.

Pretty's case was rejected by the House of Lords. She is now going to the European Court of Human Rights for a guarantee that her husband will not be prosecuted if he helps her commit suicide.

Judgement in both cases is expected in April.

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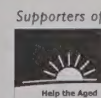
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# Blair blamed

A 102-year-old former school teacher was waiting to see if the proposed demolition of her private care home would be scrapped as *DN* went to press.

Rose Cottle took her protest to Tony Blair at Downing Street after the owners of her current home at Borehamwood Care Village agreed to sell it to property developers, subject to planning permission to build flats on it. It would have been her second eviction in three years.

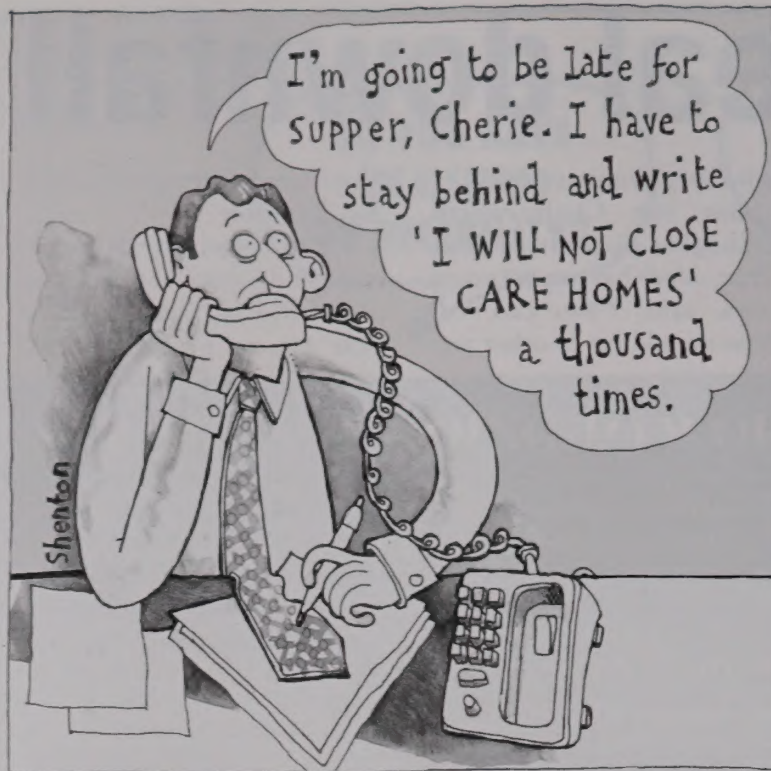
But as *DN* went to press, meetings were due with another care provider which was interested in continuing to run it as a business and with the property developers who offered to

pull out of the contract.

The problem arose after the shareholders of the complex decided to sell it, claiming they had lost up to £3 million because of government underfunding.

A spokesperson for the charity Age Concern said: "There is a chronic underfunding and underprovision of social care for older people throughout the country as local authority care budgets are reduced."

She called on the government to tackle the problem in its forthcoming comprehensive spending review and ensure that residential care homes got adequate funding.



## New order

A train network which has faced criticism for its poor facilities for disabled people has ordered 700 new state-of-the-art carriages, the biggest order for new trains in the UK since privatisation.

Govia took over the South Central network from Connex South Central in August.

There has been criticism in the past, particularly of its Hove to London route, because disabled people have had to travel in the guards van of old-fashioned slam door trains.

The new trains will have wheelchair spaces and a wheelchair accessible toilet.

The first trains will be delivered this summer.



Cracking food: Jane Wickstead, second from right, helps cook up an Easter treat to celebrate the new kitchen at Trefoil House, a holiday centre for disabled people in Edinburgh, funded with the help of £10,000 from the Abbey National Charitable Trust.

## Snowdon awards

Eighty disabled students between them received £125,000 of equipment and support when the Snowdon Awards were presented in the House of Commons in March.

Set up by Lord Snowdon, the awards help to fill the gap left by other sources of funding. This year the courses ranged from academic degrees to counselling, acting and holistic body massage.

The Snowdon Special Award went to Jane Campbell, MBE, chair of the new Social Care Institute for Excellence.

Tel: 01403 211252, e-mail: [info@snowdonawardscheme.org.uk](mailto:info@snowdonawardscheme.org.uk)

## Luck of the draw

The British Paralympic Association is to appeal for national lottery funding for winter athletes, after a disappointing showing at the Winter Paralympics in Salt Lake City.

Britain sent just two athletes to the games – Stephen Napier and Russell Docker, both alpine skiers in sit-ski classes.

But Napier came last of the finishers in each of the four alpine events, and Docker failed to finish or qualify in all four events in his class.

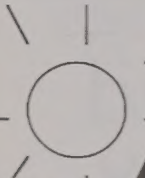
Caroline Searle, spokeswoman for the British Paralympic Association (BPA),

said: "It was worth going, to maintain British participation at the winter games and encourage youngsters to see that."

She said the BPA was "not disappointed" with the results, taking into account previous results this season.

Neither skier received money to prepare for the games from UK Sport, which distributes lottery cash through the World Class Performance Programme.

She added the BPA would ask UK Sport to change its funding policy so it could help winter athletes who weren't yet challenging for medals.




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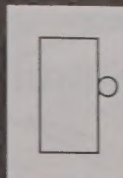
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Launch party: Anne Eaton helps launch the UK's first Mark II Wheelyboat, donated by the Osborne Trust, with support from South East Water and the Environment Agency. It will be used by disabled anglers at Arlington Reservoir, East Sussex.

## ASBAH sheds staff

A disability charity is to lay off up to four advice workers, after a slump in its income.

The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH), which has an annual income of about £2 million, faces a deficit of more than £100,000 this year. It expects a similar deficit next year (2002/03).

It has already made two members of head office staff redundant in the last year.

ASBAH blamed the impact of the foot and mouth crisis and fallout from the 11 September terrorist attacks, which has

caused a fall in business advertising, sponsorship and legacies.

Milly Rollinson, an assistant director, said the charity could lose up to four full-time or eight part-time advisers out of a total of 48.

She said: "We are trying to reduce the numbers we do have to make redundant as far as we can, but I think some will still have to go."

Brian Deffee, ASBAH finance director, said he hoped no more staff would then be laid off for the next three years, but he could not rule out further redundancies.

# Stairlift worries

A disabled man has been left without a maintenance contract for his reconditioned stairlift, after it was discovered the stair rail had been welded together using parts of other second-hand rails.

Andrew Dunnington is considering legal action against the maintenance company, Stannah Lift Services (SLS), which took nearly five years to spot the alleged problem.

But Stannah claims the case highlights national concerns about some reconditioned stairlifts sold by firms.

Dunnington, who has a spinal injury, bought the reconditioned Stannah stairlift for £5,450 in 1994 from Multicare,

which installed it on the curved staircase at his home in Stockport, Cheshire.

Three years later, Dunnington signed a contract with SLS to carry out regular maintenance.

But it wasn't until this February that SLS discovered the stair rail had been welded together from various second-hand rails, and told Dunnington it would no longer honour the contract.

Jon Stannah, managing director of SLS, said the reconditioned rail was "made to look extremely convincing, like a new Stannah rail".

"More of these re-welded products are emerging all the

time and are a real concern," he said. "We do not believe you can recondition a [curved] rail safely."

But Martin Baldwin, managing director of Multicare, said: "Mr Dunnington had eight years of use out of it."

He added: "The integrity of a reconditioned curve is as good if not better than one Stannah would make. To all intents and purposes, it is a new track. There are a lot of very satisfied customers."

David Fazakerley, managing director of the Lift and Escalator Industry Association, said his organisation had "concerns" about the issue of reconditioned stair rails.

## Watchdog unleashed

A new care watchdog will be launched in April to enforce standards in residential and home care.

The National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) will enforce a new set of standards in residential care from the outset.

And in July a further set of standards will regulate agencies providing home care to people living in the community.

Emily Holzhausen of Carers UK, which represents unpaid

carers like relatives and friends, said: "Better standards and better regulation of domiciliary care is something that carers have been crying out for for decades. It is a very important step forward."

Meanwhile, Health Minister Jacqui Smith has cracked down on care and nursing home owners whom she accused of cashing in on money to provide free nursing care.

People in residential care have been entitled to free nursing care since October.

The government had planned that the extra cash it provided for this would be passed on to residents in reduced fees.

But Ms Smith said: "It has become clear over the last few months that some care home providers have used the opportunity afforded by the introduction of free nursing care to increase rather than reduce the fees."

Now home providers will be forced to give a breakdown of nursing costs.

### In brief

#### Scope web launch

The charity Scope is to launch a new website on 29 April to help families of pre-school children with cerebral palsy.

Susan Clow, project manager of the website, said: "It will inform professionals, empower parents and children and enable Scope to pick up on issues that are important to the families." [www.scope.org.uk/earlyyears](http://www.scope.org.uk/earlyyears)

#### Baywatch thank you

Thanks to the 120 readers who have volunteered to check out abuse of disabled parking bays in supermarkets for the Baywatch campaign. We still need more help. Tel: 020 7619 7323.

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Did you send the photo *Free as a Bird* to our Freedom in Focus competition? It shows a man "death-wiring" near Stirling Castle. We need your details to include you in the competition. Tel: 020 7619 7319.

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# Call for cash

A national charity is calling on the government to set up a special payments scheme for people with haemophilia infected with hepatitis C.

Lord Morris, who is president of the Haemophilia Society, revealed the results of new research by the society in the House of Lords in March.

It found that 50 per cent of those affected have seen their income drop or fail to rise. And 40 per cent of men were unable to get life insurance, while 14 per cent could not get a mortgage.

Around 5,000 people with haemophilia contracted hepatitis C between 1969 and 1985 after being given infected blood

products. Of these, 2,829 are still alive.

The society wants a payments scheme to be set up, similar to one for people with HIV who were infected in the same way.

Speaking in a House of Lords debate, Lord Morris said the campaign should not be necessary.

He said: "The issue is one of moral right."

But government spokesman Lord Filkin said: "Although we have enormous sympathy for the individuals affected by this tragedy, we do not believe that a special payments scheme is justified."

## Benefits boosted

Two new social security measures to be introduced this month will benefit disabled people and carers.

The earnings of severely disabled people will now be completely ignored in assessments for the Independent Living Fund (ILF). Earnings of partners will also be disregarded.

Maria Eagle, Minister for Disabled People, said severely disabled people could gain as much as £130 a week.

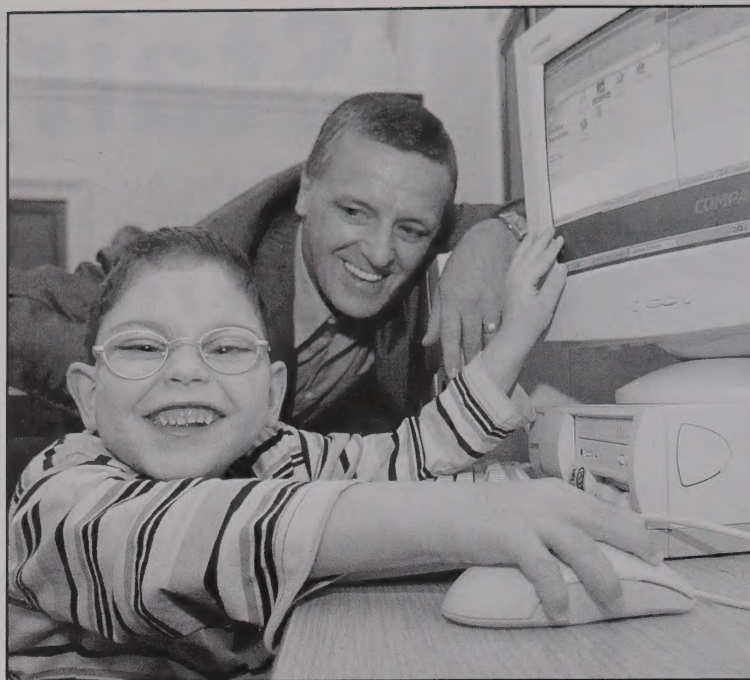
There will also be large increases in the amount of savings that are ignored in an ILF assessment and an

increase in the upper limit of savings.

Eagle said: "All disabled people have the right to live as independently as possible. These measures will give severely disabled people greater financial independence and freedom to choose their own care and support."

April also sees the introduction of a second state pension.

The government estimates this will help two million disabled people and two million carers, who will now be able to build up credits for a second state pension as well as a basic state pension.



Kids' stuff: Taylor Roberts, five, posed with social worker Steve Millward and his new computer, which was awarded when he was named Young Person of the Year by Liverpool social services.

## Carrott show gets stick

The BBC has been criticised over a new comedy show featuring a character with severe cerebral palsy.

The Jasper Carrott sitcom *All About Me*, set in Birmingham, features a character called Raj, played by Jamil Dhillon. While Dhillon has good speech, the boy he plays does not speak. The voice of another person provides his comments on life.

Ex-TV presenter Mik Scarlet said: "I can't see many disabled people thinking it is a fantastic, ground-breaking character."

Youngsters at Scope's Beaumont College welcomed the use of a disabled character.

But Richard Brewster, chief executive of the charity, which has campaigned for communication aids, said: "It would be a shame if the key dramatic device – Raj's lack of speech – was not addressed."

A spokesperson for TV production company Celador said Raj would get a device if another series was commissioned. Dhillon does not do a Brummie accent, she added.

## News review

**DN rounds up news covered in the mainstream media over the last few weeks**

### Stem cell go-ahead

A House of Lords committee gave the green light to research using stem cells from embryos. They can now be used to try to find treatments for "common and serious" disorders and repair damaged tissue.

The report said that there was "a strong scientific and medical case for continued research".

Reproductive cloning will remain illegal.

### Op victory

A blind woman who gave birth after a failed sterilisation operation has won a landmark court victory giving her compensation to help care for the child.

Karina Rees had the operation in 1995 because she didn't think she could cope with a child.

The hospital trust is considering an appeal.

### Baby gets surgery

The parents of a child with a facial disfigurement finally gave permission for doctors to do emergency surgery.

The parents of the three-month-old girl, who has Goldenhar syndrome, had objected to Newcastle Royal Victoria Infirmary carrying out an operation to help her breathing difficulties. They said the operation was unnecessary.

But following a High Court hearing in Leeds, they agreed to let the treatment go ahead.

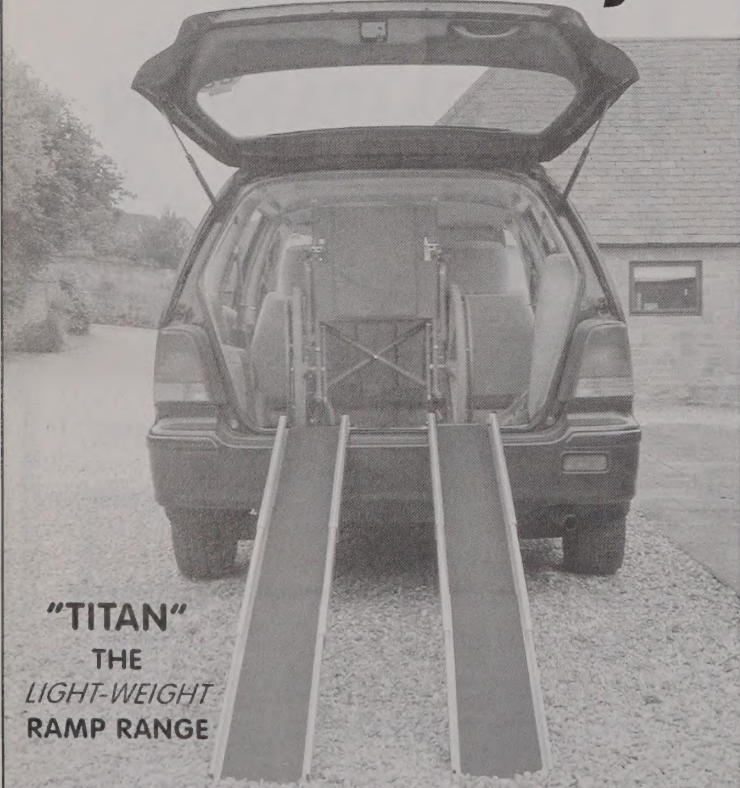
### IVF link

Children conceived through in vitro fertilisation (IVF) are twice as likely to be born with serious disabilities, a study in *The New England Journal of Medicine* found.

The researchers studied data on children born with assisted conception in Western Australia.

And a Swedish study in *The Lancet* found IVF children were three times more likely to have cerebral palsy and four times more likely to have learning disabilities.

## Access-Easy!

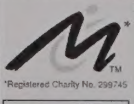


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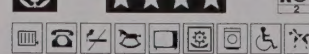
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# Capital U-turn

Disability campaigners have given a cautious welcome to the news that disabled drivers will not have to pay to enter central London when congestion charging is introduced next year.

Under London Mayor Ken Livingstone's original plan, blue badge holders from outside Greater London would have had to pay the £5 charge.

Now the Mayor has confirmed that all badge holders will be exempt when the con-

gestion charge is introduced next February.

But they will have to pay a one-off charge of £10 and register with Transport for London.

Alun Francis, co-ordinator of Radar London Access Forum, said the £10 charge was "still a bit of a contention" and there were concerns about how easy registration would be.

But he added: "The congestion charge has to be tried in order to alleviate congestion

and as things stand, it is not disadvantaging disabled people as much as it might have done."

• Campaigners hope a planned £5m boost to London's Taxicard scheme, which subsidises cab journeys by disabled people, will not fall foul of Mayoral budget cuts forced by the Greater London Assembly (GLA).

Livingstone has agreed to cuts of £67.5m in his transport budget. The GLA originally asked for £90m worth of cuts.



Mug up on MAGIC: Ford is giving away teddy bears in Northern Ireland to publicise its free Mobility and General Information Centre (MAGIC) service for disabled drivers. Tel: 0800 240241.

## Bad marks for bosses

More than three-quarters of UK bosses have not employed a disabled person and say they have had no opportunity to do so, according to a new survey\*.

And 64 per cent of those in catering and retail said they were reluctant to employ disabled people because of other people's attitudes.

The survey of 1,000 employers across the UK was carried out by jobability.com, an employment website for disabled people, run by Leonard

Cheshire, Microsoft and recruitment website totaljobs.com

But at the launch of the research, totaljobs.com faced criticism.

Its operations director Keith Robinson admitted the company had just one disabled full-time employee in a workforce of 85.

Mr Robinson interviewed about 80 people for marketing jobs in the last year, and not one of them had "an obvious disability". He said disabled people were just not applying.

"Maybe when people see the words sales or marketing they discriminate against themselves," he said.

But Michael Turner, co-director of the recruitment bulletin and website *Ready Willing Able*, which is staffed by disabled people, said: "There are a lot of initiatives about disability and virtually all of them are run by non-disabled people."

\* *Employers' Attitudes Towards Employing Disabled People*, free, tel: 020 7802 8246.

## More benefits time

The government is to double the length of time that it pays full benefits to people going into hospital.

Pensions Minister Ian McCartney announced in February that from 2003, the six-week limit after which claimants have benefit cut is to be extended to 13 weeks.

Benefits affected by the change include Incapacity Benefit, Retirement Pension, Severe Disablement Allowance,

Council Tax Benefit and Income Support.

Mr McCartney said that 97 per cent of people going into hospital are not affected by the current six-week rule. But he added: "I want to do something to ease the worry and disruption for the other three per cent. People have ongoing fixed commitments, such as housing costs and utility bills, while they are in hospital and we have decided to be more generous."

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# Rights in demand

Government plans to ban employment discrimination against elderly people should be extended to cover goods and services, a charity has said.

Help the Aged is also calling for a commission to tackle age discrimination.

The charity made the demand after publishing the results of a survey into the problem.

The report, *Age Discrimination in Public Policy*, reveals that 41 per cent of people feel that elderly people are

treated as a burden on society.

It says that older people are routinely denied healthcare on the grounds of age. Hospitals place upper age limits for routine breast screening and also for admission to special cardiac care units.

The report also says that the upper limit for the amount spent on residential or nursing care for older people can be 50 per cent less than what is spent on younger people.

And public transport discriminates against elderly people

who have disabilities, it says.

While the government is currently completing a consultation on banning age discrimination at work by 2006, the charity wants this to be brought forward and extended to goods, facilities and services.

Paul Cann, director of policy at Help the Aged, said: "As long as older people are viewed as second-class citizens, they will receive second-rate care that is damaging, degrading and can have tragic consequences."

[www.helptheaged.org.uk](http://www.helptheaged.org.uk)



Botanical birthday: Joanne Archibald, 29, who has a learning disability, at the birthday party of a Salford Council garden centre.

## Support services hurt

A decision by two councils to pull the plug on a support service for deafblind people flies in the face of government guidance, a charity has claimed.

Redcar and Cleveland Council and Middlesbrough Council have decided to stop funding a communicator guide service for seven elderly people run by the charity Sense.

The scheme offered the elderly clients help with shopping, hospital trips and reading.

Guidance issued by the

Department of Health last year said that local authorities should make special provision for deafblind people.

The charity accused the council of making the cut for financial reasons.

A Redcar and Cleveland Council spokesman admitted that a government grant to help it fund such schemes was cut from £828,000 to £436,000.

But he said both councils had ended the contract because of concerns about the qualifications

of staff and the quality of the service.

He said clients had been offered a full reassessment of their needs. "We are working with them to develop appropriate alternatives," he said.

But Malcolm Matthews, director of community support and information at Sense, said: "This service cut is a terrible indication of how far we still have to go in getting deafblind people the recognition and services they so desperately need."

## Learning lottery

People with profound and complex learning disabilities face a postcode lottery in access to education after leaving school, according to new research.

Organisers of the Enhancing Quality of Life\* project called for greater collaboration between education services, social services and health agencies.

The project and research was

carried out by Skill (the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities) and the University of Cambridge.

Liz Maudslay, policy director of Skill, said: "These messages have gone to the government and we will make sure they keep going out."

\* Resource pack, £20, from Skill on 020 7450 0620.

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Olympic dreams: Prison officers from Litchfield have walked the length of Ireland to raise money to help local disabled athletes compete in the 2003 Special Olympics.

# Helpline hardship

Final efforts to save jobs for disabled employees at a Welsh travel information service were underway as DN went to press.

Bus company Arriva has withdrawn its subsidy for the service called traveline in Anglesey, where 10 of 12 employees are disabled.

The Anglesey service, one of three in Wales, needs to take

1,000 calls a day to maintain its present staffing level, but currently only receives about 300.

Gwyn Jones, head of social services for Anglesey County Council, which helps run the service, said there would probably have to be cutbacks if no new funding was secured.

He said: "We are working very hard to try to get alterna-

tive funding, but unless something is forthcoming, it is a probability that things would have to be curtailed."

Welsh Assembly member Peter Rogers raised concerns about the service, saying it suffered from a lack of publicity.

He has arranged for a Welsh Development Agency advisor to visit traveline.

## Financial failures

Disabled people in Scotland are excluded from accessing basic financial services because of "poverty and discrimination", according to a survey carried out by a leading charity.

Capability Scotland called on institutions, the government and the Disability Rights Commission to improve accessibility.

One third of the Scottish disabled people questioned in the survey did not have a current account or a cheque book.

Approximately one in five of the 182 people surveyed had been refused life insurance and more than a third did not have home contents insurance.

But Alan McMillan, assistant secretary of the Committee of Scottish Clearing Bankers, said he did not believe Scottish banks discriminate against disabled customers.

He said: "Scottish banks do not discriminate against the disabled. Certainly, none of our members knowingly do not comply with the law."

## Access denied

More than a million hearing impaired people in London are being denied access to museums, theatres and sports facilities, according to new research.

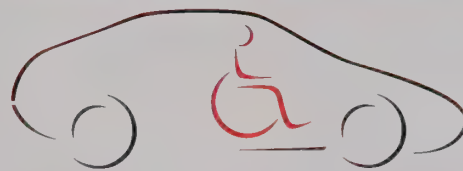
A survey by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) found that only about a third of London's favourite attractions provide any facilities for deaf and hard of hearing people.

The charity has urged London Mayor Ken Livingstone and the government to improve access.

One venue singled out was the Tower of London, where staff were "very unhelpful" and there were no sign language tours, subtitles for videos, textphone or appropriate printed information.

James Strachan, RNID chief executive, said: "One in seven people are deaf or hard of hearing, yet many of London's major tourist attractions treat us as if we don't exist."

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# Mind wants choice

Mental health charity Mind has launched a campaign to allow people more choice in the mental health services offered by GPs.

The campaign My Choice, launched in February, came as the government began restructuring primary care services in England and Wales, introducing new Primary Care NHS Trusts.

At present almost 50 per cent of GP practices do not

have a counselling service, the charity claimed.

And early results from a new Mind survey show that 98 per cent of people visiting their GP were prescribed medication, despite fewer than one in five of them specifically asking for it.

The Mind campaign wants greater choice, allowing people with mental health problems to use talking and art therapies, along with exercise, massage

or complementary therapies.

Richard Brook, chief executive of Mind, said: "Our experience shows us that different people get the best results from a whole range of treatments. Unfortunately, the reality is that doctors are not always aware of what alternatives to medication might be useful for dealing with mental health problems, or do not have access to them." [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

## Therapy doubt Alzheimer's drug hitch

The alternative therapy homeopathy has been dealt a double blow after two studies cast doubt on its effectiveness.

The therapy, which is used for conditions including eczema, asthma and arthritis, is available on the NHS, and up to 470,000 people in the UK use homeopathy every year. Many GP practices provide it.

The therapy works on the principle of treating "like with like" by diluting substances repeatedly. But substances are diluted so much that not a single molecule of the original may be left in the final preparations.

An analysis of research into homeopathy, by the NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination

at the University of York, found that there was not enough evidence that it worked for the treatment to be given.

Research fellow Paul Wilson said: "There is not enough evidence to recommend homeopathy as a treatment for any specific condition. But we can't say that it does not work. We just haven't got enough evidence on whether it works or not."

Meanwhile, a study into the use of homeopathy for people with asthma, published in the *British Medical Journal*, has found that it does not help the condition.

The study involved 242 people with asthma who were allergic to house dust mites. [www.bmj.com](http://www.bmj.com)

## Alzheimer's drug hitch

Hopes of a cure for Alzheimer's disease received a blow in March when researchers ended clinical trials.

Irish company Elan and its US partner Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories first halted trials of the drug AN-1792 in January after reports that four people showed signs of inflammation of the central nervous system.

But Dr Ivan Lieberburg, chief scientific and medical officer at Elan, said: "There are additional compounds under pre-clinical evaluation. We believe that these alternative therapeutic candidates may result in a treatment for Alzheimer's."



Green fingers: Colin Anidjah has been helped by the therapy on offer from gardening charity Thrive. It has just been given £322,526 in lottery money to do further research into the therapeutic benefits of gardening. For more information, visit [www.thrive.org.uk](http://www.thrive.org.uk)

## Stroke fall study

Research is to begin aimed at protecting people who are vulnerable to falls after a stroke.

The research, funded with £80,000 from the Stroke Association, will be carried out by Southampton University's School of Health Professionals and Rehabilitation Sciences.

The study will look at 200 patients for 12 months after their stroke and measure things like balance and attention.

Stroke is the biggest cause of serious disability, affecting 300,000 people at any one time. The researchers hope to find out which types of stroke cause the most falls and which people are most vulnerable.

Professor Ann Ashburn said: "We hope to identify who is most at risk and therefore ensure effective fall prevention programmes can be enforced upon transfer from hospital."

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# Lifting guides that limit life

The government's new lifting guidelines may help care staff. But they threaten disabled people's independence, says Ben Furner

**N**ew government guidance published last month should help paid care staff make better informed decisions about the manual handling – or lifting – of disabled people at home.

But the issue is a vexed one, and disability campaigners are warning that the guidance, published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), doesn't help as much as it should.

Citing health and safety grounds (and fearful of compensation claims, particularly for back injuries), some care agencies refuse to sanction certain kinds of manual handling. This means disabled people may be forced to limit their activities and depend on friends and family members.

In some cases, disabled people and their families say that care agencies convey blanket "no lift" policies – contrary to the new guidance.

One such case involves a family who are taking their county council to judicial

review. The case is complex, but at its heart is the council's refusal – according to the family – to provide carers to lift two adult, multiply disabled sisters. The family can't be named for legal reasons.

may be "at risk of harm". The council won't talk about the case in any detail, but maintains that it doesn't uphold a "no lifting" policy.

Ameena Berkowitz is a wheelchair user with a full-time personal assistant (PA). For several years, her PAs have been using a type of standing transfer to get her from one sitting area to another. Recently she was informed that her care agency will no longer train their staff to do that. Since then, Ameena has twice fallen trying to use sliding boards to get to the lavatory.

Yet while she was out swimming recently, a physiotherapist used the standing transfer without comment.

Equipment can help, but it can be costly; waiting lists are long and training is important.

Berkowitz says: "When you go out, you face a whole new set of problems. Should I have to rely on my friends to get me to the loo when I'm in the pub, whilst my PA twiddles her

period began in autumn 2000.

Gerry Zarb, policy analyst at the DRC, thinks some progress has been made. However, he says: "Even if the guidance was perfect, it's down to care workers to implement it."

Zarb also says the absence of clear guidelines on resolving disagreements between care workers and users can leave disabled people's rights unprotected.

The guidance certainly talks up the importance of involving disabled people in discussions about manual handling, but the focus is on using equipment to minimise the risk to paid care staff. Even some professionals are concerned that the balance is leaning too heavily towards the rights of paid staff.

From a legal standpoint, the HSE is careful to point out that care providers have responsibilities, not just under health and safety legislation, but also under the Disability Discrimination Act and, crucially, the Human Rights Act. But it fails to go into detail about how care agencies apply the three together.

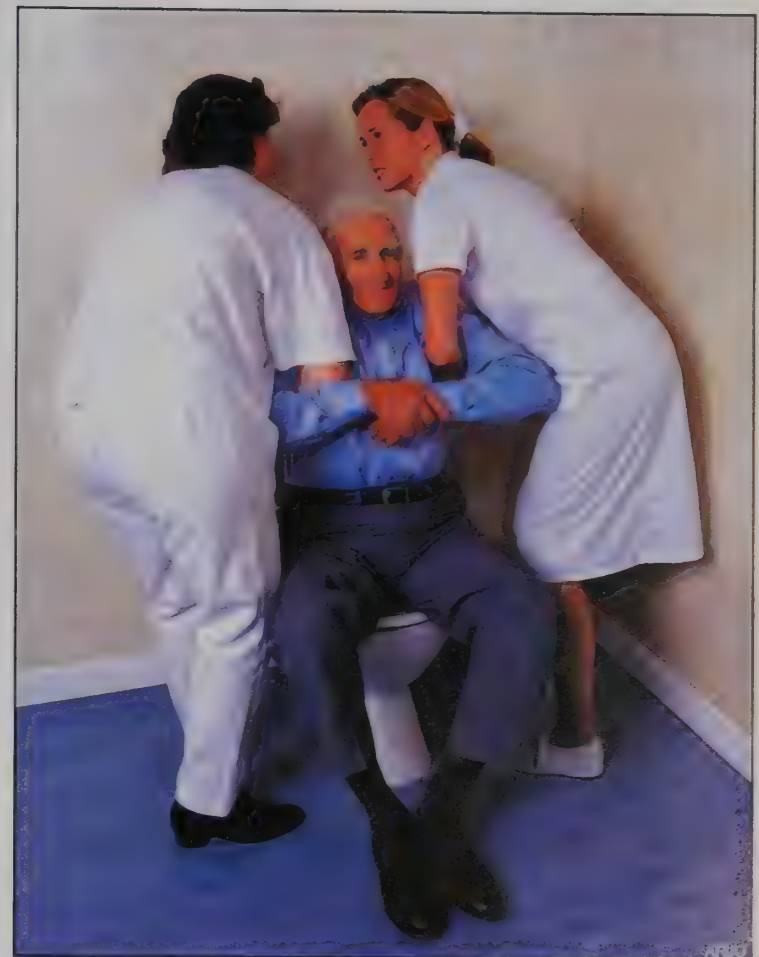
Risk is an element of almost any job. Yet, however laudable it is to have rules about being safe at work, disabled people are being forced to curtail their choices.

As Ameena Berkowitz points out: "The problem is deciding what is a 'reasonable risk' or 'reasonably practicable' as described in the new guidance. What's reasonable to me and my friends may not be reasonable to someone else. I can no longer transfer to my sofa – is it unreasonable for me to want to do that?"

The HSE must review the guidance within five years. In the meantime, disabled people may have to fight to get the care that suits them, their lifestyles and their choices.

Somehow, that doesn't seem reasonable at all.

*Ben Furner is a freelance journalist.*



Hands on: but some care agencies no longer want to lift manually

**'Few people would dispute that ensuring care workers are safe at work is vital, but in some cases, this is at the expense of disabled people's independence'**

review. The case is complex, but at its heart is the council's refusal – according to the family – to provide carers to lift two adult, multiply disabled sisters. The family can't be named for legal reasons.

The family, supported by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), maintains that the council is in breach of an undertaking it gave to provide whatever care was considered necessary by an independent assessor. That assessment said that, in some circumstances, "A" and "B" (the sisters) would have to be manually handled as there was no appropriate equipment.

The case has been further complicated by the council applying for a court order to have the sisters removed from the family home, saying they

thumbs? Or should I just not go out at all?"

These questions are not addressed by the guidance.

In the meantime, the HSE is facing fierce criticism for its approach.

"The whole process has been flawed from the beginning," says Frances Hasler, director at the National Council for Independent Living (NCIL). NCIL advised the HSE on the drafting in its latter stages, but condemns the consultation exercise undertaken by the HSE and its failure to consult more widely with disabled people.

Their view is echoed by other organisations, including the College of Occupational Therapy, which wasn't approached by the HSE – though the consultation

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# Live wire

Andy Behrman has experienced the highs and lows of manic depression – and came through to tell the tale. He talks to Rod Hermeston just as his new book hits the shops

“**M**ania is about desperately seeking to live life at a more passionate level, taking second and sometimes third helpings on food, alcohol, drugs, sex and money, trying to live a whole life in one day. Pure mania is as close to death as I think I have ever come”

“In my most psychotic stages, I imagine myself chewing on sidewalks and buildings, swallowing sunlight and clouds.”

These are two extracts from Andy Behrman's new autobiography *Electroboy*, published by Penguin.

If Behrman's mania almost sounds like fun, that's because it was in many ways. But it led him into male prostitution, frightening spending binges, art fraud, and eventually prison. At other times, he felt suicidal.

Andy, 40, grew up and still lives in New York, the son of well-to-do Jewish parents.

He knew at an early age that he was different because of his obsessive behaviour.

But it was at university that

the manic depression really kicked in, though he did not get a diagnosis until many years later. He was introduced to new stimulants like alcohol, sex and drugs and he craved them.

After university he began working in public relations, but as a side-line he got into male striptease and prostitution – giving “handjobs” to clients for \$50. It was really just for the thrill.

As for money, Behrman had a tremendous energy to earn it and burn it. Splashing out \$8,000 in three hours on clothing was nothing.

He describes that time in the book: “Losing control during a shopping spree is probably the ultimate high for me now; it causes a strange sense of panic, a near blackout state. My heart races – I'm nervous, I'm frightened, I'm pressured, I'm stressed.”

But it was while he was working for well-known artist Mark Kostabi that he really went off the rails.

A female colleague had the idea of faking some Kostabi

pieces and signatures. He knew it was risky, but couldn't help himself. “No matter what she had said to me, I would have thought it was a great idea,” he tells me.

The twist was that Kostabi famously did not paint a number of his works himself. He just signed them.

It is pretty surprising that Andy didn't get caught earlier, since he had an obsessive need to tell people, including journalists, exactly what he was doing.

But sure enough his actions caught up with him and he ended up in prison – a dirty, smelly “shit-hole”.

The problems continued after his release.

“99 per cent of my experiences were in the high state but the lows were horrible. It wasn't like regular depression – they were full of rage,” he says.

He reached a low after having tried every conceivable combination of drugs, and an endless procession of therapists and psychiatrists who eventually decided he had manic depression.



DEBORAH COPAKEN KOGAN

A life less ordinary: Behrman is now stable

One day, he says, “I was walking up Madison Avenue and I couldn't hear any noise and everything was a blur. My head was pounding and I knew that I had come to the end of my life.”

It sounds extreme but it took that to drive him towards the controversial treatment Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT), which jolts electricity through the brain and can cause serious memory loss and confusion.

The first treatment seemed to have real benefits.

He says: “My head felt that it had been relieved of this horrible weight and distress. I felt like I had been unwound.”

Even that did not last. After about 20 treatments, he decided to stop having ECT. He believes that it probably helped him but he has now found a drug combination that works.

It involves taking 30 pills a

day, and many have side-effects.

His condition has been under control for about three years and he has been busy. The book came about after he wrote a “somewhat humorous” article for the *New York Times* on ECT, though he criticises its overuse and the fact that its side-effects are not explained to people.

He has also sold the rights to a film about his life and is starting work on a second book.

Meanwhile, he helps other people with the condition who are returning from hospital to the community.

It's clear that much of that energy and drive still remains.

“It is the left-over part of my mania which is what you would call drive that keeps me going. It is ingrained in my personality. It certainly never disappears.”

*Electroboy* (Penguin, £10.99) is in bookshops now.

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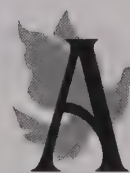
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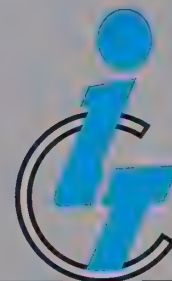
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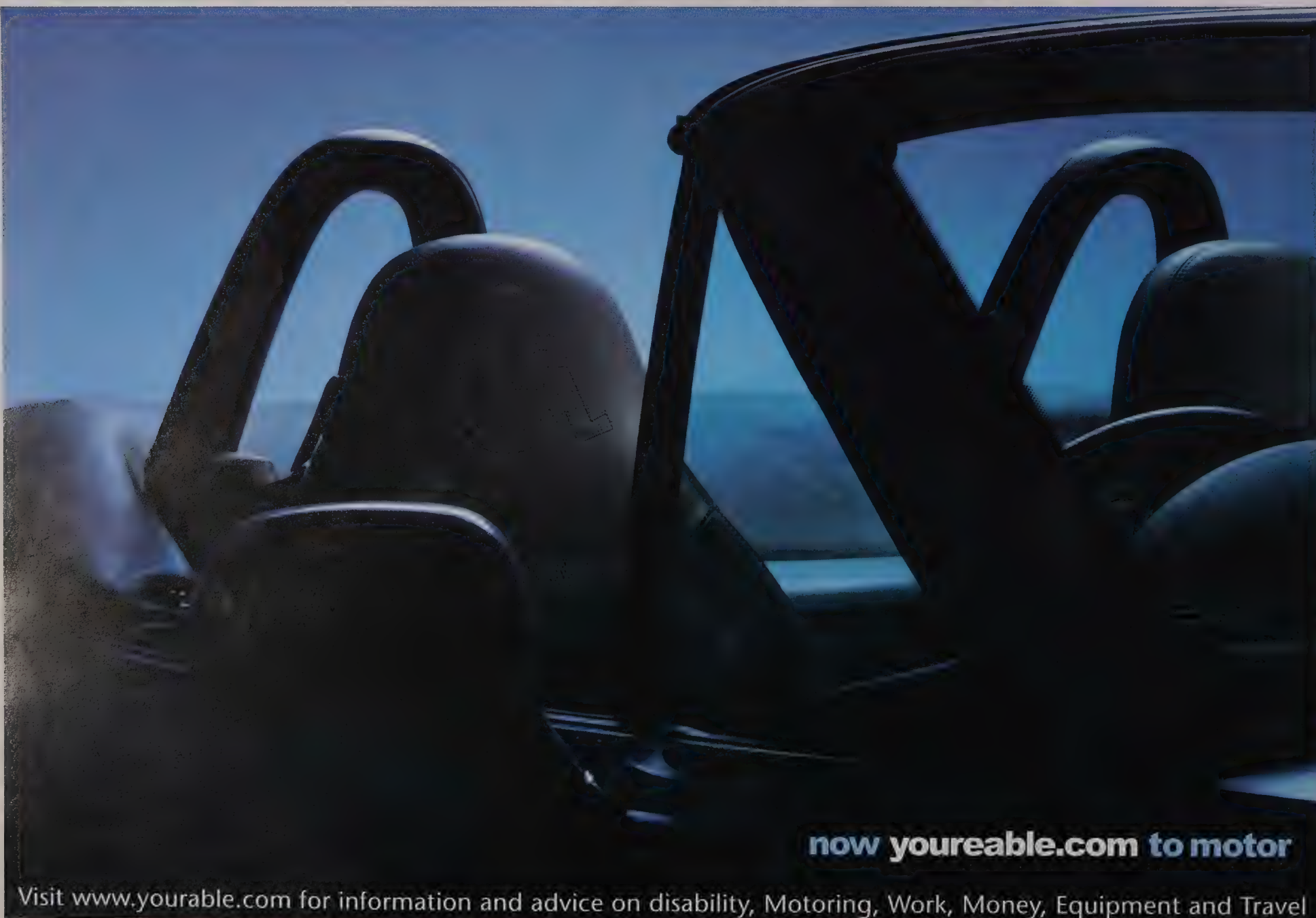
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# Getting blood out of a stone

Douglas Campbell finds that two petrol giants are rather unconcerned about the needs of disabled customers

Last month I wrote: "The big oil companies that still control a huge share of the petrol stations do not seem to care what happens when a disabled driver pulls in."

I sent a copy of the article to both Shell and BP and asked for their comments.

I asked BP if they recognise the problem and they confirmed that they do. They

a site run by BP will be able to get the help they need with refuelling? They replied: "Staff are trained to help where and when they can. The likelihood depends on the staff resource and we can't give the service if we're single-manned. However, our retail strategy is focused on a large store format, with more of our sites than ever now multi-staffed."

admitted they had no way of testing it!

Meanwhile, Shell avoided giving the wrong answers by not providing a response of any sort. They did telephone just before the deadline to get some more time, but the second deadline was missed too.

Neither Shell nor BP appear to consider that they have a duty to meet the needs of disabled drivers. We will have to see what the Disability Rights Commission has to say. Perhaps they will be able to tackle the oil companies head on.

Meanwhile, a DN reader tells me that another oil company with many filling stations in the UK is seeking advice on how it can best meet the needs of disabled people. Let's hope they make a better job of it than Shell and BP.

Watch this space for more news.

The "Happy2Help" scheme announced exclusively in DN last month is about to be

launched. We will let you know as soon as we can how to find a participating garage.

In the meantime, if you have trouble getting help I suggest you head for your nearest supermarket filling station –

they nearly always have at least two staff on duty.

I am off in a minute to my local Tesco, where I get friendly help, competitive prices, Clubcard points and computer vouchers for schools.

**'Neither Shell nor BP appear to consider that they have a duty to meet the needs of disabled drivers'**

said they are working to "ensure BP's compliance with forthcoming legislation in relation to existing facilities".

They have conveniently overlooked the fact that large parts of the Disability Discrimination Act relating to delivery of service are already in force and have been since 1999.

I asked what is the likelihood that a disabled driver going into

In my experience, this really means disabled drivers cannot rely on getting assistance at a BP filling station.

The company also said: "One of the features we now install in our new-build, company-operated sites is a device called 'Servicecall'."

Interestingly, only a few days ago I visited BP in Southgate. The Servicecall was not operating and the manager



SAM GILLESPIE

Blocked off: when will the big oil companies take away the barriers to disabled drivers?

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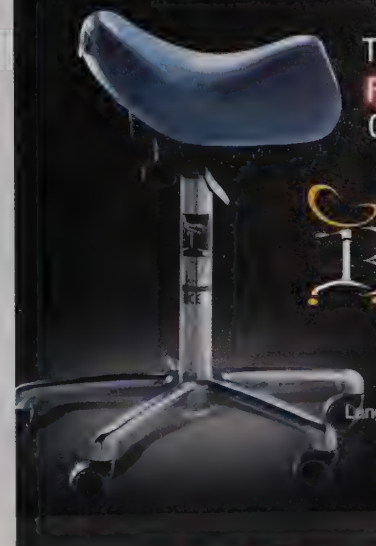
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Ian Rideout from the charity 'Cerebral Palsy Action' based at Alness in Scotland, is confident that the Bambach Saddle Seat® will help to ease the pain and improve the mobility of many disabled people who are now forced to slump in uncomfortable positions that make movement difficult. He commented: "Improving their posture allows them freedom to move, and with that comes more capability and greater independence and self-esteem."

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# Letters to the Editor

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ILLUSTRATIONS: CLARE CURTIS

## Winter fuel payments campaign goes on



I was disgusted with the response from Minister for Disabled People

Maria Eagle with regard to disabled people not having the winter fuel payments (DN, March). I am writing to her. **Malcolm Beddow** Stanton upon Hine Heath Shropshire

I wrote to the Prime Minister last year about the winter fuel payment, explaining that I was 57, living alone and receiving £81 per week incapacity benefit and the middle rate of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA), and that I have a car on the Motability scheme. The DLA

I need to use for my disability. As you can imagine, £81 does not go very far for food and household bills, and extra washing.

I told the Prime Minister I cannot afford to have the heating on much in the day, let alone at night, and my mobility is very poor so I cannot move around to keep warm.

My sister-in-law is 61 and has a works pension. My late brother left her well provided for. She is very fit and walks for miles, yet she receives the £200. My sister and her husband also say they do not need the payment and use it for Xmas presents.

I used to be a nursing auxiliary and saw elderly people who needed the payment, but also a lot who did not.

The reply I received from a civil servant didn't help at all. I felt it was fobbing me off with loads of information, but nothing to do with a winter fuel payment.

The government should do something to help younger severely disabled people. **Marion Jackman** Maidenhead, Berkshire

I receive the winter fuel payment as an OAP, but believe that all severely disabled people should receive it.

Without heat in winter I am ill and I'm sure many under 65 must be in that situation too.

I wrote to my MP Harold Best and he is very supportive. **Beatrice Rogers** Leeds

## Old attitudes to prostitution breaking down

Your article "Clients pay to get sex" (DN, February) shows that the long-standing negative attitudes towards prostitutes are at last breaking down.

I have always believed that people with disabilities and residents of care homes have the right to use prostitutes.

I am looking forward to the

day when brothels will be legal, the most important advantage being guaranteed regular health checks for prostitutes.

**D A P Nicholson**, London W14

## No one cares about air

I have chronic asthma and require oxygen to be available when the need arises to maintain a reasonable standard of life.

Last Christmas my 18-year-old daughter gave us her savings of £400 so my wife and I could have a holiday abroad. No problem, so we thought – all those lovely travel companies must be able to help us. We were wrong; they haven't got a clue. We tried the specialist disabled travel companies. Ok if you're in a wheelchair, but if you require oxygen, that's a different matter.

Holiday Care's information sheet *Use of Oxygen on Holiday* is excellent if you are staying in the UK. For travelling in Europe, I was referred to the International Department of Health. They sent a letter apologising for their sketchy information and referred us to the travel operator with whom we were travelling.

We were going to Spain so I spoke to the Spanish Embassy in London, who referred me to the local tourist office in the area we were going to. No help there either.

The Internet told us it was ok if you live in America where it appears they organise "oxygen cruises". We want to stay on dry land in Europe. Where do we go from here?

**David Macnab**, Chelmsford, Essex

*DN obviously needs to cover holidays which accommodate oxygen users. But have you any helpful experiences to share? Editor*

## Petrol pump help

I was dismayed to read about Douglas Campbell's experience at a BP petrol station in Faringdon (DN, March).

Faringdon Garage, Marlborough Street, in the centre of town, sells Murco petrol. The forecourt is manned 7.30am-6pm Monday to Saturday, and all customers have their petrol put in the tank for them.

Customers get out of their car only if they choose to and the attendants are always cheerful (even when getting soaking wet). If you were to request extra attention, eg someone to check your oil level, I feel sure it would be done.

**Pat Williams** Faringdon, Oxfordshire

## DN's new look

*We hope you like DN's updated cover and page 1. Besides looking sharper, we think the cover will make DN more easily recognisable in newsagents and supermarkets – Editor.*

## DN fundraiser

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## PC pulse

by Dan Batten

### Ali-oops!

Ali G caused uproar among Radio 1 listeners in a chat with DJ Sara Cox about pop star Gareth Gates (who has a stammer). Ali asked "Is he the spasticated one?" The comment is offensive to me, one of the "spasticated", and will be used by impressionable people. But doesn't this parody say more about the intellect of people using such terms than the "group" it so crudely tries to "define"?

### Must try harder

Working on the employment supplement, DN rang the Teacher Training Agency. We learned that a priority was attracting more disabled people into teaching. Except, if you have a hearing impairment, it seems. There is no minicom. Go to the back of the class, TTA.





# Wise up to work

## Leading the way on the DDA

How do you create a workplace that welcomes disabled people? Simon Minty finds out

**N**ow that the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) are nearly six years old, organisations should be getting to grips with them.

Some already have inspiring employment policies. And they are not just doing it to comply with the DDA but because it enables them to attract and retain valuable staff. It's worth taking a look at a couple of examples of best practice.

Lloyds TSB began by asking disabled staff for their views. Feedback revealed:

- Concerns about obtaining reasonable adjustments;
- A lack of career progression for disabled staff;
- Feelings of isolation; and
- A lack of information.

The bank reacted by creating tailored programmes, including one to oversee "reasonable adjustments". This is designed not only to support the disabled person but also their line manager. It involves the diversity department, occupational health and external disability service teams. So far over 300 disabled staff have been referred to the programme and of all the cases that have so far been resolved, more than 70 per cent of staff have been appointed or retained.

Three-day career development programmes have been introduced to tackle promotion problems for disabled staff. Soon after attending the courses, two staff members were promoted and one

**'It makes ethical and financial sense to ensure that disabled staff work as effectively as possible without physical, attitudinal or bureaucratic barriers'**

switched departments and acquired new skills after 17 years in the same post.

Lloyds TSB has also established a disabled staff network to reduce isolation. It meets regularly to discuss issues and share best practice ideas.

As for the apparent lack of information, the bank put together a disability resource



Capital job: GLA employee Tanya Birch, who has a hearing impairment

pack with comprehensive information on all aspects of disability for members of staff, disabled and non-disabled, and for use with customers.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is another good example of what an employer can do. It identified three areas it needed to tackle:

- Access to its temporary headquarters;
- How to make its workforce representative of the London population; and
- How to attract disabled job applicants.

An access audit was commissioned which traced the "journey" a disabled person would take if they were seeking

level of disability awareness among all relevant staff.

The audit recommended that a disability working party should be set up and the GLA has introduced disability equality training, with over half of staff attending so far.

Despite its efforts, the GLA realised that disabled people still might not apply for jobs. So it launched targeted recruitment campaigns, acknowledging that disabled jobseekers use the same routes as everyone else but may also use alternatives such as the disability press. The GLA started to work with specialist recruitment agencies and disability consultancies to help recruit talented disabled people. For disabled people who did apply and were unsuccessful, the GLA ran a course to develop interview technique, CV writing and other jobseeking skills.

The GLA has set ambitious recruitment targets and is establishing a comprehensive monitoring process, going beyond raw numbers, looking at where existing disabled staff are in the organisation.

Lloyds TSB and the GLA are both working towards being employers of choice and best in

their class. Of course, they need to evolve and they will make mistakes. But both organisations are trying to minimise errors by involving disabled people at all stages of the process. Getting senior support is vital too.

It makes ethical and financial sense to ensure that disabled staff work as effectively as possible, without physical, attitudinal or bureaucratic barriers; to reduce the risk of losing valuable staff who may become disabled; and to attract talented disabled people.

Having a workforce that is representative of the population an organisation serves must also enhance its provision of goods and services. *Simon Minty is a director of Churchill & Friend, a disability and diversity consultancy, tel: 01707 324466, email: office@churchillandfriend.com, or visit the website at www.churchillandfriend.com*

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# 'Lives are changing'

Minister for Disabled People Maria Eagle talks about what the government is doing for disabled people, and looks to real life for examples. Leaders in the field respond



We're leading the way in Europe when it comes to ensuring that discrimination has no place in society. We've made it clear that we'll end the small employer exemption from employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in 2004. We're bringing another 7 million jobs into the scope of the DDA.

We've changed the law to protect disabled children and adults from discrimination in education, ensuring that people have the same opportunities to gain qualifications and skills

**D**isabled people should be able to work and apply for jobs without being discriminated against. It's as simple as that.

**'More and more employers are seeing the benefits of employing disabled people for themselves'**

That is my belief and it's the belief of this government. That is why we've put a framework in place to protect disabled people from discrimination in the workplace.

We've taken the disability legislation we inherited and given it teeth. We set up the Disability Rights Commission. One of its jobs is to ensure that disabled people's rights are respected in the world of work.

that will stand them in good stead when they come to the labour market.

We've also introduced a host of programmes to help disabled people look for work and stay in work. New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP), WORKSTEP and other schemes are all removing barriers to employment.

And we're making sure that work pays. Disabled people can now take advantage of more flexible links between the

benefits system and employment to take advantage of work placements and trials. People can work part time and keep some of their benefits. I could go on.

And it isn't just good intentions. Lives are changing. Let me give you a couple of examples of how government-led initiatives are making a difference.

Stuart and his wife now work as customer service managers in a call centre in Scotland. They love their work. It's convenient for them as they work the same shifts.

Stuart was an hotelier until a serious accident forced him to give up his business five years ago. Not long ago, Stuart felt pretty negative about work, having had no luck in finding anything suitable. His wife is his carer, so she had little flexibility. It was an NDDP scheme that made the difference for Stuart and his wife.

David was a milkman for 37 years until a lung condition meant he could no longer cope with such a demanding job. His NDDP job broker helped him with worries about benefits, application forms and even went to interviews with him.

David now works full-time and was commended for his excellence on the company training course. What's more, he got a £200 Back to Work Bonus to help with the costs of returning to work.

Clearly the people I've mentioned have reaped the benefits. Their lives have changed for the better. They show that the practical help on offer makes a difference.

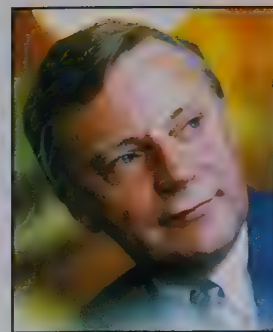
And these success stories are changing attitudes – not just yours and mine, but those of employers.

More and more employers are seeing the benefits of employing disabled people for themselves. These employers are spreading the word, changing attitudes.

There are still far too many disabled people who want to work and can bring valuable skills to employers but who aren't working. I'm committed to changing that.

But it isn't just down to us politicians. It's a joint effort. We must all work in partnership to make sure that disabled people enjoy the same rights and the same success in the work place as non-disabled people.

There can be no excuses.

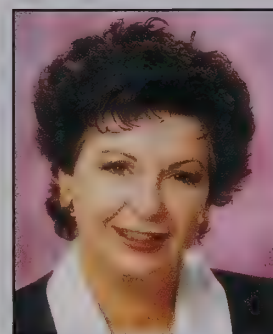


**John Monks**  
general secretary  
Trades Union Congress

The right to work is a basic civil right, as is the right to adequate support for those who cannot work. The TUC welcomes this government's many initiatives to improve the faulty law (DDA) they inherited.

However, since the DDA came in, the number of disabled people able to work but unable to find a job has not changed. This fact tells us – and our members confirm it – that prejudice and discrimination by employers against disabled people continue. The culture is still wrong. Many disabled people never make it through recruitment in the first place. When someone at work becomes disabled, the employer should work with the individual to devise appropriate rehabilitation which may include disability leave and adjustments to the job. Instead, many who could return to work end up on benefits for life.

Most of the Disability Rights Task Force's 156 recommendations to strengthen the law remain to be carried out. The TUC supports them all. Urgent government action to introduce them would fill many gaps in the law and help tackle the continued discrimination against disabled people at work.



**Susan Scott-Parker**  
chief executive  
Employers' Forum on Disability

The Forum welcomes Maria Eagle's commitment to ensure progress on legislation and policy, which helps disabled people to find work – and to access goods and services. As a former member of the Disability Rights Task Force we look forward to

the announcement of further progress *vis-à-vis* the Task Force's recommendations.

As Eagle observes, the DDA is doing much to capture the attention of employers and services providers. At the same time, we are seeing a growing awareness on the part of disability consumers, as well as disabled employees, of their new rights.

We also welcome the government's interest in partnership. Indeed, our partnership with Jobcentre Plus resulted in the initiative with Stuart and his wife both working at Centrica.

In our experience, when organisations remove barriers for disabled customers, both attitudes and physical services, it becomes easier for them to employ and retain disabled employees. B&Q's investment in welcoming deaf customers, for example, resulted in high calibre deaf applicants coming forward for jobs simply because they got the message that if B&Q were valuing deaf people as customers, then they would value also deaf people as potential employees.

We hope to build future partnership with the government to make these opportunities available on a broader scale.



**Bert Massie**  
chairman  
Disability Rights Commission

There has indeed been progress since 1995 but, as the Minister implies, there is no room for complacency. Disabled people of working age are still seven times more likely to be out of work and claiming benefits, and twice as likely to have no qualifications.

By the time they come to apply for a job, disabled people have the odds stacked against them because of discrimination in education, transport, services or, for some disabled people, access to the world beyond their front door.

The Minister does not mention the government's Access to Work scheme. This excellent scheme is little known to both disabled people and employers who could benefit. It provides employers and disabled people with advice on adjustments in the workplace and money to pay for them. The DRC believes this important scheme should be extended to disabled people in the full range of employment and pre-employment situations, such as people on work placements, voluntary work or in vocational training. It would also be helpful if it were allocated sufficient funds to meet all the demands placed upon it.

## Receiving Direct Payments? Thinking about applying for them?



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# How to get your foot in the door

Dan Batten gives tips on getting started in the working world

**W**ith many choices and decisions to make, the journey to your first job can be a daunting ride. Even if you have a good idea of where you want to be, it's useful to have some help along the way.

First, consider what you want to do, and what implications your disability may have for your ability to do that job. Look at your interests and key skills and what jobs will make good use of them. But be realistic: you may want to be a magazine writer, but it's unlikely you'll dive into your dream position immediately.

If you need help weighing up your options, find the address of your Jobcentre Plus office or Jobcentre in the phone book or on the Jobcentre Plus website and arrange to speak to a Disability Employment Adviser. They offer job seeking tips, training opportunities and support in finding a job, as well as information on benefits you can claim while working, such as the disabled person's tax credit.

They also have details of schemes you can get on, including the Job Introduction Scheme, which pays a grant to your employer for the first few weeks of your employment, and WORKSTEP, which gives opportunities for supported jobs.

The Access to Work programme gives advice on how you and your employer can negotiate any work-related problems your disability may bring. It also gives information about its grants to help with the cost of aids such as equipment and support workers (like sign-language interpreters).

Once you have an idea of what your options are and what help is available, where do you find jobs? Again, Jobcentre Plus offices or Jobcentres can help. As well as having vacancies advertised on boards, you may be able to join a job club. They offer a structured approach to finding a job, and help with CV and letter writing skills.

Many people find jobs in newspapers such as *DN*, trade magazines, and even the internet. Some national newspapers, like the *Guardian*, publish vacancies from different sectors in a pullout section each day.

Job agencies can offer an extra set of eyes to look out for

you. You could also write to companies you would be interested in working for to see if they have any jobs; and if you know a person working there, use their knowledge as a way in.

When you apply for a job, you will be asked to submit your CV. This should list your academic qualifications, achievements and skills. Mention your interests to give an idea of your personality. You don't have to mention your disability on your CV, or even if you are offered an interview, but you will not be covered by the DDA if you fail to.

If you haven't had a paid job, mention things from your education or any voluntary work that demonstrate particular skills. You may have helped coordinate a big school event or meeting that involved working with lots of people, which has given you organisational and people management skills. Whatever

you do, don't lie on your CV. If you claim to have a skill you don't, you can create an awkward situation for yourself.

Keep your CV to a maximum of two pages and don't waffle. Employers see lots of CVs, so make yours stand out by being as punchy and confident as possible, without being arrogant. Take time to design it, use easy to read fonts and good quality paper.

You will also need to write a covering letter. Like your CV, you should keep it as precise as possible and stick to one page. In your first paragraph, make it crystal clear what job you are applying for, in case the company are filling several jobs, and where you saw it advertised. In the next two or three paragraphs, say what skills you have that match the ones needed to do the job and give examples. Keep the tone formal but not pompous, and only use words that would

appear in your everyday speech.

If you've done all of the above well, you may be invited for an interview. Remember that your interviewers have to know about your disability to make any adjustments for your interview under the DDA. And mention what Access to Work can do to help should you get the job.

First impressions are vital. Make sure you are dressed smartly, ideally in a suit with clean shoes, and that your hair and face are tidy. When you first meet your interviewers, try to appear as positive and natural as possible, but don't be over familiar. When answering questions, try not to say too much or too

little, and stick to the point.

Most people think interviews are a one-way street where they just answer questions. Do some research on the company and ask a few questions about the job or an area of their work that interests you. Ask if there are any questions they have regarding your disability and your ability to do the job. Even though you have an interview, you may need to allay any fears they have about your disability.

You can't anticipate every twist and turn on the job highway, but our tips should set you on the right road. So don't sit in neutral, rev up that engine in the job-hunting rally.

SAM GILLESPIE

**Action for Blind People** have employment development centres in Carlisle, Liverpool, London and Preston, tel: 020 7635 4800, website: [www.afbp.org.uk](http://www.afbp.org.uk)

**Disability Net** posts ads on its website: [www.disabilitynet.co.uk](http://www.disabilitynet.co.uk).

**Employment Opportunities** for disabled people, tel: 020 7481 2727, website: [www.opportunities.co.uk](http://www.opportunities.co.uk)

**Jobseeker Direct** tel: 0845 6060 234, or go to [www.Jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.Jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

**RNIB** offers training and advice, tel: 020 7388 1266, website: [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) and [www.togetheritworks.org.uk](http://www.togetheritworks.org.uk)

**RNID** offers advice and training, tel: 020 7296 8000, helpline: 08457 669999, minicom: 0808 808 9000, website: [www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk).

**Skill, The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities** offers help and advice on job hunting and some vacancies, tel: 020 7450 0620, website: [www.skill.org.uk](http://www.skill.org.uk)

**Workable** offer job opportunities and work placements, tel: 020 7553 0002, website: [www.workable.co.uk](http://www.workable.co.uk)



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The Trust is strongly committed to equal opportunities in employment for all and to developing an employment environment that values the contribution of a diverse workforce. We therefore welcome and encourage applications from people with disabilities.

If you would like to discuss our current vacancies, please contact the Recruitment Bureau who can also provide you with a copy of our vacancy bulletin and application pack or visit our web site at [www.surreyandsussex.org.uk](http://www.surreyandsussex.org.uk)

The Recruitment Bureau, Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, Crawley Hospital, West Green Drive, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 7DH Tel: 01293 600443. Fax: 01293 600442. Email [jobs@surreyandsussex.org.uk](mailto:jobs@surreyandsussex.org.uk)

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# What worked for me

John Pring asks seven disabled people what they did to get where they are now

**T**he seven disabled people interviewed on these two pages have not been selected because they are trailblazers. They are simply people who tried various approaches to training and employment and found what worked for them.

The only thing they have in common is that they found an approach or scheme that produced results.

If you would like to try something similar, check out the contact information box for a selection of further details. They could help you the first few steps along the way to career fulfilment.

## Mainstream training

Last October, Allan Tweddle became the first blind person in England and Wales to qualify as a chartered accountant.

After university, he got a job in London as a trainee chartered accountant with one of the Big Five accountancy firms.

As with other new recruits, Tweddle worked for the firm while attending an approved accountancy course.

At the end of the compulsory three years training, last October, he qualified as a chartered accountant, having passed his final exams in July.

"For a visually impaired person, I thought a professional qualification was a good idea, because you are competing against highly qualified individuals," he says.

He trained with BPP Professional Education, and

found them "really, really helpful". They provided him with course materials on disk, Braille exam papers and scribes to take down his dictation during exams.

At work, he has received help from Access to Work with the equipment he uses, which includes Jaws speech software, a scanner and a Braille computer display.

He says: "Many people have an assumption that people with visual impairment would not want to deal with numbers, graphs and diagrams, and frankly that isn't true. If you want to do these things, you will always find ways of doing them."

*The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, tel: 020 7920 8100 or visit [www.icaew.co.uk](http://www.icaew.co.uk) BPP Professional Education, tel: 020 8740 2222, website: [www.bpp.com](http://www.bpp.com)*

## Access to Work

When singer-songwriter Heidi McGeough decided last year to become a full-time musician, she knew there would be obstacles.

Heidi, from the Wirral, Merseyside, has a visual impairment and couldn't drive to her gigs around the north-west.

Her visual impairment also meant she would need specialist software and equipment for her computer.

In 1994, she had received computer training for a hospital administrative job from Access to Work (ATW), a government programme that helps disabled people and their employers overcome obstacles in the workplace. Heidi decided to ask ATW for help again.

As a result of two assessments by the RNIB, Access to Work paid for her to employ her own driver for 21 hours a week and for computer software, five days IT training, and a 17in monitor and CCTV for her computer, provided by Leonard Cheshire.

She says: "It would probably have been very difficult physically and financially to do what I do without ATW being there for me."

But she is critical of ATW's claim form, which was not accessible. She eventually had to apply over the telephone.



JEFF ROBERTS

Now, thanks in part to the assistance provided by ATW, she is optimistic about the future. "Things really seem to be taking off," she says. For information on Access to

Work go to the website [www.Jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.Jobcentreplus.gov.uk) Anyone who would like to book Heidi can contact her on 07801 066006 or e-mail: [heidi@thepurpleroom.com](mailto:heidi@thepurpleroom.com)

**BBC**

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**If you wish to discuss employment at the BBC or find out more about our disability support services, please contact Eddie Lynch, Disability Employment Adviser, BBC Recruitment, PO Box 10670, London W1A 6GJ. Telephone: 020 7765 1120. Minicom: 020 7765 1192. E-mail: [eddie.lynch@bbc.co.uk](mailto:eddie.lynch@bbc.co.uk) Please quote ref. 54614/DI**

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For a current list of vacancies, check out our website at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/jobs> or look out for advertisements in the regional and national press and on CEEFAX page 696.

## Mentoring

David Abbott was on incapacity benefit with a stress-related condition when he was referred to Shaw Trust, which helps disadvantaged people find employment.

After a six-week placement with a cleaning firm in Leeds, he was offered a part-time job through WORKSTEP, the supported employment scheme (see page 27).

"I took the part-time job to see how I would cope with the hours, which were gradually built up, with the understanding that Shaw Trust would be involved," he says.

In January, he was offered a full-time, permanent job with another cleaning firm, Office Cleaning Services.

With both jobs, he has a mentor, a manager who supports him and offers advice.

"It's just knowing there is somebody there to talk to who is aware of my situation. She puts my mind at ease," he says. Shaw Trust, tel: 01225 716350, [www.shaw-trust.org.uk](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk) and see information box





## Volunteering

Although Eve Rank-Petruzziello now has a paid job, is a Disability Rights Commissioner, and a member of both the National Forum for People with Learning

Disabilities and the Learning Disability Taskforce, she started out as a volunteer.

She began helping a self-advocacy group in Peterborough, Speak for Ourselves, after being put in touch with them during a college placement with social services.

She then moved to another self-advocacy group in Cambridge – Speaking Up – and spent three years as chair.

That led to her first paid post in May 2000, as the co-ordinator of a project to set up a service users' parliament.

In October 2001, she decided it was time to move on and joined Values Into Action,

which campaigns with learning disabled people, where she became an advocacy project worker.

Eve, who lives in Peterborough and London, says: "I got sick of people using my services for nothing and I thought they should start paying me."

Volunteering for her was "a way forward. It gave me new skills and built my confidence up more," she says. To find out about volunteering contact the National Association of Volunteer Bureaux, tel: 0121 6334555, e-mail [info@navb.org.uk](mailto:info@navb.org.uk) or visit [www.navb.org.uk](http://www.navb.org.uk)

## New Deal for Disabled People

Marcus Kane retired in July 2000 from his work as a scientific officer with the NHS on health grounds after a hip replacement became infected.

He moved into adapted housing and began attending a day centre in West Lothian, Scotland. "I was very down, very depressed," he says.

Just as he was completing a computing course, staff at the day centre suggested he try the New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP).

He was found a placement working for West Lothian



Council's information service at the new West Lothian Ability Centre.

A short work placement of 15 hours a week was extended, and he was then offered a part-time job. He has now been offered a full-time,

permanent contract.

The support he has received from government job brokers will be gradually phased out over the next year, and he is waiting for some equipment under Access to Work.

He says he would still be at home if it wasn't for the NDDP, which he would "definitely" recommend to other disabled people. "Until I got into this, I didn't see any way forward," he says.

New Deal for Disabled People, tel: 0845 6062626, [www.newdeal.gov.uk](http://www.newdeal.gov.uk) or visit your local jobcentre or social security office



## Disability Discrimination Act

When Paul Stannard was told the device he used to drive articulated lorries was being withdrawn from the market, he obtained a new top-of-the range appliance.

Stannard, from Lancashire, who has a prosthetic hand, attached the equipment to the steering wheel, and was pleased with how it worked.

But some colleagues refused to drive a lorry with his device attached and kept taking it off, even though the manufacturer warned it should never be removed.

Eventually, the device was damaged and Stannard was given work around the depot.

An official complaint didn't seem to work. Then he spotted

a reference to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) on a website.

The DRC advised him on what steps he should take under the DDA. Within weeks his company directors agreed to provide permanent attachments to two of the lorries, without the matter having to go to court.

"The back-up I got from the DRC was absolutely fantastic. It really, really did give you confidence to know there was somebody there who knew what they were talking about," he says.

Disability Rights Commission's helpline, tel: 08457 622633, textphone 08457 622644, or visit [www.drc.org.uk](http://www.drc.org.uk)

# information

**Broadcast journalism:** For information about training as a broadcast journalist, visit The Broadcast Journalism Training Council's website at [www.bjtc.org.uk](http://www.bjtc.org.uk)

**Disability Alliance** has employment factsheets such as *Moving into work* and *Self Employment – why not?*. More information available on their website: [www.disabilityalliance.org](http://www.disabilityalliance.org)

**Disability Partnership:** The Disability Partnership runs a scheme called the Leadership Consortium, a mentoring and leadership development programme to nurture talented people with disabilities who are already employed. Tel: 020 74141494 or 74141490, fax 020 74141495, e-mail [leadership@disabilitypartnership.co.uk](mailto:leadership@disabilitypartnership.co.uk) or visit the website: [www.disabilitypartnership.co.uk](http://www.disabilitypartnership.co.uk)

**Magazine industry:** For information about work in the magazine industry visit the Periodical Training Council's (PTC), tel: 020 74044168, website: [www.ppa.co.uk/ptc](http://www.ppa.co.uk/ptc)

**Newspaper journalism:** For information about training to be a newspaper journalist, contact the National Council for the Training of Journalists, tel: 01279 430009, fax 01279 438008, e-mail [info@nctj.com](mailto:info@nctj.com) or visit [www.nctj.com](http://www.nctj.com)

**RNID:** see page 21

**RNIB:** see page 21. The RNIB has three specialist colleges:

**RNIB Vocational College** in Loughborough: contact Emma Walsh, marketing officer, tel: 01509 611077, e-mail: [enquires@rnibvocoll.ac.uk](mailto:enquires@rnibvocoll.ac.uk) or visit the website at [www.rnibvocoll.ac.uk](http://www.rnibvocoll.ac.uk)

**RNIB Redhill College of Further Education** in Redhill, Surrey, offers education and training for young people and adults with a visual impairment, and specialises in supporting students with learning disabilities and additional needs: tel 01737 768935

**RNIB Manor House Skill Development Centre** in Torquay, Devon, offers assessment, rehabilitation and training to visually impaired adults: contact the admissions department, tel: 01803 214523 or fax: 01803 214143

**Scope:** Scope's Fast-Track programme offers work placements and personal development training for disabled people of graduate calibre. Recruitment takes place every February. For information tel: 020 7619 7299, textphone: 020 7619 7187, fax: 020 7619 7399, website: [www.fast-trackpartnership.co.uk](http://www.fast-trackpartnership.co.uk)

**Social work:** For a career in social work or social care, visit: [www.socialworkcareers.co.uk](http://www.socialworkcareers.co.uk) or tel: 0845 6046404

**Solicitors:** For information on becoming a solicitor, contact the Law Society on tel: 0870 6062555, e-mail [legaled@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:legaled@lawsociety.org.uk) or visit [www.training.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.training.lawsociety.org.uk)

**Teachers:** The Teacher Training Agency says one of its priorities is to attract more disabled people into the profession. Its Teacher Information Line is on 0845 6000991 (no minicom) or visit [www.canteach.gov.uk](http://www.canteach.gov.uk)



## Specialist college

Rachel Clews always attended mainstream schools. But after completing her GCSEs, a major operation left her needing daily physiotherapy.

The only way to continue her education was to attend a residential college.

Clews, who has cerebral palsy, opted for Hereward College in Coventry, which takes disabled students from

all over the world and some non-disabled local students.

She spent four years there, completing a GNVQ in intermediate business studies, and an advanced GNVQ in the same subject.

"I did enjoy it. There was a good social side to it. If you had never been away from home before, it brought you out of your shell," she says.

She believes it provided as good an education as a mainstream college.

She now works as a business services assistant with Southern Derbyshire Chamber.

Hereward College, tel: 02476 461231, e-mail: [enquiries@hereward.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@hereward.ac.uk) website: [www.hereward.ac.uk](http://www.hereward.ac.uk)



## DIRECTORY OF OPPORTUNITIES SERIES

Disability Information Services have produced two directories, to help you find the best Supported Employment and Further Education placements.

The series provides comprehensive information on a range of opportunities and possibilities. This allows you to pinpoint the most relevant colleges, workshops & organisations.

The Directory of Supported Employment Opportunities, an essential tool for finding supported employment, has been updated & expanded. The Directory includes details of workshops & client groups as well as the products, services & tasks each undertakes. In addition it contains information about national organisations & publications relevant to disability & employment.

The Directory of Further Education Opportunities focuses on special provision in mainstream colleges for disabled people. It provides information on over 250 colleges throughout England. It covers all aspects of mainstream further education & includes detail on access issues, support staff, courses & qualifications.

For information about the Directories & other resources please contact: Leonie Riddett on 01306 875156 Email: [Leonie.Riddett@diss.org.uk](mailto:Leonie.Riddett@diss.org.uk)

DIRECTORY OF OPPORTUNITIES



# DO SOMETHING YOU LOVE FOR A LIVING

**Are you looking for a rewarding career with real variety? Then a career looking after children might be just what you're looking for. Of course, there are lots of career options out there, but if you see yourself as someone who can offer children a good start, then early years, childcare or playwork could be just right for you.**

The Department for Education and Skills has launched a major campaign to encourage more people to work with children. Central to this campaign is a commitment to increasing the numbers of disabled people who work in childcare.

The campaign aims to raise the status of childcare and focuses on status, training and qualifications as well as promoting childcare in terms of opportunities. The Government is committed to recruiting a skilled workforce across the childcare sector and has set clear targets for increasing the recruitment of under represented groups - which includes people with disabilities. The target is to increase employment of people with disabilities by 15% by 2004.

## Can disabled people work with children?

All kinds of people work in early years, childcare and playwork. Children and young people need a variety of positive role models and good influences. School leavers and students, adults of all ages, disabled people, people from ethnic minorities, men and women all play an important part in caring for our children. This has several benefits, not least of which is that it encourages us all to rethink who can look after children. And children gain the advantage of being looked after by a real diversity of people, which reflects the wider world around them.

Having a disability should not stop you from considering a career working with children if you believe you have the right skills and there is a range of training courses to get you started. It is worth bearing in mind that as a childcare worker you will be responsible for supervising

children and supporting your employer in meeting their health and safety responsibilities. Think about the skills you could pass on to a child or young person - whether it's playing football, helping with homework or playing an instrument. A career looking after children gives you the opportunity to use those skills to help children grow and develop. Details of training course can be obtained from your local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. You may also find it useful to try some work experience with a local nursery or Out of School Club. Another option is to take part in a short, introductory course, called Making Choices, which will be organised by your local Early Years, Development and Childcare Partnership. Contact them direct for more information about dates and times.



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## So Why Work with Children?

As more women return to work after having children, the demand for reliable, good quality childcare has rocketed over the last few years.

And good quality education, care and play for children from birth to age 14 makes a real difference to these children's lives.

Career-wise there's plenty of choice and variety. Working with children isn't just about babies and toddlers, you could specialise in working in a kids club with children up to the age of 14, or with younger children in a playgroup.

The hours are very flexible with opportunities to work full-time, part-time, in holidays or term time only. The work is also incredibly varied. You could spend one day playing snooker with a group of 10 year olds and the next helping youngsters with their computer skills. You might be spending the day working on a mural or making music with a group of five-year olds - Quite a change from your average job!



## Case Study 'Sharon Clark'

Sharon is 30 and has slight cerebral palsy, which affects her legs. She also has a metal pin in her left leg from an operation and uses elbow crutches. Sharon works at Twilight After School Club Leicestershire and has just been promoted to Play Leader at the Brockington After School Club also in Leicestershire. The club caters for children aged between 7 and 15.

Says Sharon:

"Children stare of course, not because they're rude, but because they don't know about disability. I think society needs to be more aware of people with disabilities.

I tend to educate the children through play and hopefully educate the children to be more considerate and disability aware."

Although she is an intelligent and articulate young woman, Sharon left school without any qualifications - except a City and Guilds certificate in Childcare.

"When I was at school there was hardly any provision for disabled children and little provision for special needs so hence the lack of qualifications - but since working at Twilight I've gone on to do lots more training and now have qualifications in First Aid and basic Health and Hygiene. I've also taken a Child Protection Training Course. We're very much encouraged to continue our training - it's all part of the job!"

A typical day will start as school finishes although the club expands to a Holiday Club when term time finishes when the club takes children all day until 6pm.

Explains Sharon: "I escort all the children from primary school to the Out of School Club which is based in a local college - it's not far - I have a four wheel disability scooter which I use and I'm accompanied by another staff member. The children are so used to the scooter now that apart from wanting to press the buttons they don't really take much notice, although they do know they have to stay with me and not run off, because I can't run after them! When we get to the college we give them a light snack and then arrange an activity - although most of the older ones prefer to entertain themselves - they have a go on the Play Station or have a game of snooker and I help them with their homework. With children every day is different.

In terms of how the children have reacted, Sharon is very positive. "They have very much adapted to me - for example if I am walking across to where they are playing football I used to have to shout stop but now they'll stop by themselves. I brought my wheelchair into the club one day and explained that I use it when I go shopping as I can't walk very far and the scooter doesn't fit into the car, They all had a go and we did some role-play. One boy in particular was horrified when the person pushing the chair was spoken to rather than the person in the chair. I also find that they're much more aware of issues like access - some of them will comment 'Oh you couldn't get a wheelchair in there' when they are visiting new places."

"The job is incredibly rewarding - I think it's because children are always thirsty for knowledge and to be able to try and give them that knowledge and to be able to guide them on the right way makes the job very worth while."

"Prejudice is learnt behaviour. If children have someone they relate to who has a disability, they are perhaps less likely to stare when they see someone who looks a bit different. With the children I work with, I think I have broadened their horizons and made them think differently."

## Want to Know More?

If you are on health related benefits the Government has introduced New Deal for Disabled People, helping sick or disabled people who want to work, find work. It is voluntary and you decide whether or not you want to join it. For more information visit their website at

<http://www.newdeal.gov.uk/english/unempdisabled/>

For more details on careers and training in childcare contact the Childcare Recruitment Campaign on **0800 99 66 00** for a free information pack.

Or visit our website [www.dfes.gov.uk/childcarecareers](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/childcarecareers)





Double life: self-employment means Simone has time for family

## The best of both worlds

Simone Baker, of the Disabled Parents Network, worked full-time until she became pregnant six years ago.

She now splits her working week between consultancy and voluntary work for the Thalidomide Society.

"I feel that I am in control and if anything should happen, if my daughter is ill, she comes first.

"I like working for myself because it is flexible and you can fit your work around how you feel.

"If you are at work, I don't think an employer or work colleagues would be particularly understanding if you said 'my back aches, my shoulder's killing me, I am just going to sit outside for an hour'."

Baker, who has a thalidomide impairment, says: "Just getting dressed and showered in the morning takes me an hour and a half. My whole day is like that.

"I haven't got the energy that I would like to have to be able to do a day at work and come home and have some energy for looking after a child."

## FREEDOM IN FOCUS 2002

Closing date looms, don't miss out!

Photographers young and old don't delay, for our competition deadline is almost upon us! If you haven't heard, FIF is brought to you by Disability Now and Leonard Cheshire and invites disabled amateur photographers of all ages to either take or direct images in the categories of "landscapes" (e.g. holiday shots, buildings, cities) and/or "portraits" (e.g. friends, family, classmates) You may want your pictures to have a disability theme, but this is not compulsory. Each category will have a winner and a runner-up in two age groups, under 18 and 18 and over. FIF reaches its climax at the House of Lords in June, where the best images will be exhibited and winners will be awarded their prizes.

### FABULOUS PRIZES!

- All four winners will receive a digital camera, and runners-up will be presented with a standard 35mm camera.
- Winners aged 18 and over will also win a one-week stay for two at Sandringham's Park House Hotel
- Under 18s will be treated to a trip on the London Eye, accompanied by professional photographer Graham Bool.

Judges for this year's competition include Lara Masters, (actress, writer and co-presenter of *That's Esther*), Graham Bool (professional photographer) and Chris Cheesman (news editor of *Amateur Photographer*).

Closing date for entries is 29 April 2002. For more details and an application form, contact Judith Reid at Disability Now, tel: 020 7619 7319, or email: [judith.reid@scope.org.uk](mailto:judith.reid@scope.org.uk)

# All worked up

Getting a job is great. But for many disabled people, it's just the start of their problems, says John Pring

**F**atigue, stress, job insecurity, bullying, unsupportive colleagues...

Five years after the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), the workplace can still be an unwelcoming place for disabled people.

Barry Hayward, former co-ordinator of Arthritis Care's employment programme, says people with arthritis can find it particularly tough.

"The stresses and strains of wondering if you dare take time off, or whether your colleagues really understand your condition and the terrible fatigue that often accompanies it, can make it impossible to perform a job adequately," he says.

Fear of discrimination can lead to many disabled people trying to hide their disabilities.

Julia MacPherson, from the charity Mind, says it is often difficult for employees to know whether to confide in a manager if they have a mental health problem, for instance. "You may be open to harassment from other employees; assumptions may be made that you are less productive, or there might be fewer opportunities for career development. But keeping it secret is quite stressful as well."

It all points to a lack of disability awareness among employers.

Caroline Clipson, a research and policy officer for Scope, says disabled people often get overlooked for promotions and other career developments, because employers are looking at the disability rather than at what the employee can do.

Stephen Franks, employment co-ordinator for the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, agrees there is a lack

of awareness. He says employers often do not know where to go for advice about deaf awareness and are delighted when he gets in touch. But he adds: "Obviously there are some who are not so enthusiastic, who just do not want to know."

So clearly, despite the DDA, there is a long way to go. The Trades Union Congress is so concerned that it is about to begin a survey of trades unions to collect evidence on workplace discrimination.

Of course, it is not just discrimination. The sheer strain of work can also take its toll. For instance, common business practices sometimes prove hugely difficult for disabled people.

Jane Hunt, vice chair of the Association of Disabled

employment project manager for Carers UK, says such people often rely on a "well-oiled machine" of alternative care when they are in work.

"If that breaks down, it can be enormously difficult. Performing these multiple roles certainly increases levels of stress, and the unpredictability of caring is an important factor. You don't know when something is going to pop up."

Starr, who has a son with Asperger syndrome, often receives calls from his school to pick him up at a moment's notice. Fortunately, she has a sympathetic employer.

"If you do not have an employer you can actually talk to, the need to disappear at a moment's notice can be hugely problematic," she says.

So those who are lucky

## 'You may be open to harassment from other employees; assumptions may be made that you are less productive'

Professionals (ADP), says breakfast meetings can be a "nightmare" because of the difficulty of arranging for a personal assistant to arrive early enough.

And Hayward says getting to and from work in the rush hour can also take a lot out of someone with arthritis.

"Fatigue is a big issue. A person with arthritis may be able to manage a job quite well and then get home and find they are good for nothing."

Disabled parents often face added difficulties, balancing children and work.

And non-disabled people looking after a disabled relative can have problems holding down a job, too.

Madeleine Starr, carers and

enough to gain employment face a wide range of problems.

There is help available. The government's Access to Work scheme provides help with equipment, though there can be long delays. And the Disability Rights Commission can help.

One alternative to putting up with unsympathetic bosses may be starting your own business. The ADP is establishing a network of disabled people who are self-employed or would like to be.

But there is no doubt work can be tough. For disabled people and carers, ignorance and prejudice can damage their work and their home lives.

ADP has booklets on self-employment, management and teaching, available free with a 33p A4 SAE for one, or 66p A4 SAE for all three, from BCM ADP, London WC1N 3XX, tel: 020 8778 5008, [www.adp.org.uk](http://www.adp.org.uk) Details about the Disabled Entrepreneurs Network from [www.disabled-entrepreneurs.net](http://www.disabled-entrepreneurs.net) *How to Deal with Bullying at Work* is available from Mind Publications, 15-19 Broadway, London E15 4BQ priced £1 plus a 44p A5 SAE, tel: 020 8221 9666 or email: [publications@mind.org.uk](mailto:publications@mind.org.uk)

## A downward spiral

When Julie Smith (not her real name) started her new civil service job, she told her employer she had multiple sclerosis and a mental health problem.

At first, everything went well. Then a new member of staff joined, whose "insensitive" behaviour began to make her ill.

Her bosses refused to make any changes to help her cope and things went from bad to worse. She became extremely unwell, was demoted and given "humiliating tasks" to do.

Her union got involved and eventually, after being found a position in another office and then having to take another 18 months off sick, she was paid compensation and left.

"When your office puts you through something like that, I don't think they really understand what you endure," she says. She now has a "fantastic" job with a much more supportive employer.



# Taking shelter

**S**upported work has a long history behind it. Rempoy, the largest provider, opened its first factory in 1946.

Now there are over 22,000 disabled people on the government scheme, which was renamed WORKSTEP in April.

There are two main types of supported employment.

There are factories where disabled people work together. And there are also jobs in the mainstream where disabled people work beside non-disabled colleagues. They are supported by an outside provider, such as Rempoy or Scope, which may subsidise their wages or provide cash for training and development.

## 'WORKSTEP is a stepping stone to... social inclusion'

The work varies widely from office work and IT to manufacturing or teaching.

Ian Charlesworth, managing director at Shaw Trust, which supports 2,700 people in mainstream jobs through WORKSTEP, says the scheme is "a stepping stone to open employment, independent living and social inclusion."

Most people are referred to a scheme by a disability employment adviser (DEA).

There were big changes last April besides the new name.

Previously people got on to the scheme if they were less productive. But now disabled people can enter it if, for

instance, they are on Incapacity Benefit or have been on Jobseeker's Allowance for more than 12 months.

And the new buzzword for WORKSTEP is "progression".

Over its first two years WORKSTEP aims to move 30 per cent of new entrants to unsupported jobs and 10 per cent of its existing workers.

Charlesworth favours progression for those who can move on. "It means the scheme is opened up to a wider group of people."

The Trust has progressed six per cent of employees to unsupported jobs since WORKSTEP began. The highest number of progressions prior to that was 2.5 per cent.

But Ken Hawkins, employment services manager at Scope, which also runs a WORKSTEP scheme supporting 685 people, is less enthusiastic about the targets.

He says: "If the client needs support for one year, two years, five or ten years, that is exactly what we will provide."

However, Scope has recently run an intensive pilot programme which progressed 70 per cent of entrants.

Scope's WORKSTEP scheme has moved away from employing the disabled person directly. And instead of a wage subsidy it aims to set targets and development plans for the client. It can pay for the necessary support, such as training, to achieve that.

Rempoy, which gets government funding of £94 million, is also changing. It

employs 6,000 disabled staff in its 81 factories and supports 4,500 through its placement scheme Interwork.

While many people on Interwork are still employed through Rempoy, there is a shift towards companies being the employer, with Rempoy subsidising the wage.

The Interwork progression rate is 30 per cent this year, says Ray Fletcher, personnel director at Rempoy. About five per cent progress from factories. And within four years all staff should have development plans.

"The more we can increase training and development, the more we can create confidence and aspirations for people to decide what they want to do for themselves," he says.

The company has set up 18 learning centres, and by the end of 2003 every factory will have one.

So the scheme offers real opportunities.

And Hawkins says clients should be demanding.

"If you've got a clear idea about what you want, ask for it and press for it," he says.

Remember, WORKSTEP is there to help you. Make the most of it.

Contact the DEA at your Jobcentre for more details.

Supported employment has seen big changes since it was introduced in the 1940s. Rod Hermeston takes a look



Troubleshooter: Kema (left) helps colleague Patrick Gallagher

## Supported from afar

Kema Amadi, 29, has cerebral palsy and works at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust in London with the support of Scope's WORKSTEP scheme.

Kema works in IT. "I help members of staff with their computers, troubleshooting and providing support."

He found the job himself, but WORKSTEP is paying for him to do a computer course. His needs will be reviewed after a year.

He says: "I'm left to my own devices. Only once in a while does someone come in to see how I'm doing. I'm happy with that. I am quite independent."

## Keeping up the standards

Helen Ford, 36, who has cerebral palsy, has worked at Rempoy's Woolwich factory for 13 years. She is a quality controller. "It involves making sure all the products on the factory floor are up to standard. And I'm being taught the wages system in the front office to replace someone who is going into hospital."



## Changes ahead

Chistine Hopkins, 50, (above) has worked at the Rempoy factory in Woolwich for 26 years. It is about to start new types of work. "We are going to fix second-hand computers and clean them," she says.

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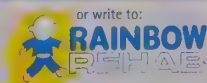
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# BE A WINNER! ENTER THE NATIONAL TRAINING AWARDS 2002

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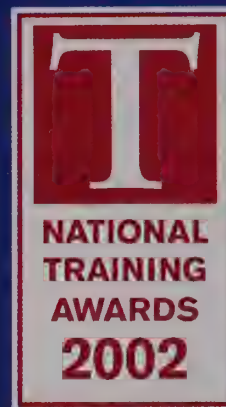
The competition deadline is **17th May 2002**, so don't miss out on your chance to win.

## Who can enter

Previous entrants have included employers who train their own staff, partnerships between organisations and training providers, as well as individuals who have taken the initiative for their own training. Winners have come from every part of the UK, from every walk of life and from every educational background.

Be part of the National Training Awards and help spread our message that training and personal development leads to lasting business and personal success.

[www.nationaltrainingawards.com](http://www.nationaltrainingawards.com)



## How to enter

For an information pack, including entry forms and guidance notes, call the National Training Awards hotline on **0800 917 7337** or email [hotline@nationaltrainingawards.com](mailto:hotline@nationaltrainingawards.com)

## Help is at hand

You can get expert advice on how to enter through the many **free** support services available:

- **Workshops** - held at venues throughout the UK, workshops offer practical guidance on preparing your entry
- **Mentors** - constructive one-to-one guidance
- **Hotline** - a dedicated information line for all your queries and requests

- **Entry handbook and forms** - including extensive information and guidance notes

- **Website** - visit [www.nationaltrainingawards.com](http://www.nationaltrainingawards.com) for the latest Awards information and a database of case studies from previous winners

## Don't delay!

If you think that training has helped you achieve your business and personal goals, then the National Training Awards offers a unique national stage for you to celebrate your success.

**Deadline for entries: 17th May 2002**

**Real people, real achievements.**

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# Employment for keeps



On the job: Jim Marchant (left) received support to keep his job from Gary Warner (right)

Figures show that many disabled people don't keep their jobs, but real life reveals that they can. Steve Davis and Wendy Craddock explore the possibilities

**E**mployment is the main pathway to personal independence. Yet disabled people are seven times more likely to be unemployed and claiming benefits than non-disabled people. In the Borough of Bromley, for example, the disability unemployment rate is 16 per cent, more than five times the general figure.

Seven out of ten disabled people of working age become disabled during their working life. Losing the services of an employee who becomes disabled deprives employers of a considerable asset: their experience and skills.

It can also be very expensive. One employer found that the average cost of retiring an employee on medical grounds was £40,000. On a personal level, losing your job because you acquire a disability can bring financial worries and loss of self-confidence.

Both employers and disabled people can seek help from the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at their local Jobcentre Plus office or Jobcentre.

Jobcentre Plus can advise employers on the recruitment and retention of disabled people. For people recently disabled, there are employability assessments, administered either in-house through the Disability Service team or at a specialist assessment centre.

The results are shared with

the client, and employer, if applicable. They are then used to create an individual, tailored package, which meets the needs of both client and employer. The package can include advice on changing work practices, retraining, work preparation courses, work experience placements and help with job seeking skills including CVs and interview techniques.

The talents of people who become disabled need not go to waste. Jim Marchant, for example, was a plumber of many years' experience, who gradually lost his sight, was registered blind, and had to leave his job. He contacted his local DEA and discussed his options.

Jim was sure that, at 53, he would never be able to do any meaningful work again. He was anxious about learning new skills and believed – justifiably – that his years of experience and knowledge as a plumber would count for nothing and be wasted.

The DEA referred him to Dorton College for visually impaired people, for an employability assessment. After discussion, Jim thought he could continue to use his skills in some capacity. A previous employer still rang him for advice, as did customers from a local DIY shop. The DEA suggested that Jim do plumbing work with the aid of a support worker who

could check his work. Jim discussed this option with his previous employer who contacted the DEA within minutes of talking to him.

Through the government's

Access to Work programme, a member of JTA Joineries workforce could become Jim's support worker and check his work. He could also act as Jim's driver to and from workplaces.

Jim is now back at work and able to use the knowledge and skills that would otherwise be wasted. His employer is pleased to have an experienced member of staff. This all became possible through making "reasonable adjustments".

## Help for employers

Employers have nothing to lose by contacting a DEA at the Jobcentre Plus office or local Jobcentre if a member of their workforce becomes disabled or the disability worsens. They can be advised on how to make "reasonable adjustments" to work arrangements.

Under Access to Work, Jobcentre Plus can make a grant towards any approved extra costs that arise because of an individual's disability. If an employer has recruited a disabled person within the last 6 weeks, the grant is up to 100 per cent of the approved costs. For disabled employees already in post, the grant is up to 80 per cent of approved costs after the first £300.

## Why employ a person with a disability?

- **Access to an untapped pool of labour.** Over 1 million disabled people, many with skills and qualifications, want to work but are unemployed.
- **Reduced staff turnover.** Disabled employees stay in the job longer, reducing advertising, training and recruitment costs.
- **Improved staff attendance.** Employers have found that disabled employees also have a strong commitment to work as well as low absentee records. A Barclay's Bank survey from 1993 found that disabled employees took 20 per cent less sick leave than non-disabled colleagues.
- **A positive corporate image.** Employing disabled people can increase the number of disabled customers using the service. It is estimated that disabled people spend around £45 billion a year on goods and services.
- **Low unemployment rates** mean some employers have recruitment difficulties, whilst others have difficulty retaining staff in certain types of jobs.

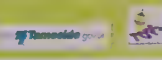
Steve Davis is special needs personal adviser at Prospects Connexions in Bromley. Wendy Craddock is Disability Employment Adviser at Bromley Jobcentre.



A career in childcare can be challenging and hard work but it's also rewarding and fun. Tameside Council's Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership aims to help people from Tameside with disabilities who are interested in pursuing a career in childcare. They have information about the different roles from which to choose, the training and qualifications needed and grants that may be available.

Interested?

Contact them on 0161 339 6705





# Employment Support for Disabled People

The Jobcentre Plus network can provide advice on employment and job retention to disabled people who are facing additional employment barriers associated with their disability.

**Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) are usually based in Jobcentres or Jobcentre Plus offices and can provide:**

- employment assessment
- job seeking advice and support
- information on specialist employment programmes for disabled people
- advice on remaining in work
- advice and information to employers employing disabled people

**For more information on the support available to disabled people and employers, get in touch with your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus office.**



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# Cabbage leaves and cuddles

Paralympic gold medallist Tanni Grey-Thompson finds six weeks of baby Carys her biggest challenge yet

**W**henver I told anyone I was pregnant, the same response usually came back: "It will change your life forever."

When I asked how, no one could really answer.

My sister-in-law was more specific: "Any bad hair day you ever had before will pale into insignificance."

And she had some advice, too: "Get up and be showered and dressed before Carys or you'll still be in your nightie at 2 o'clock in the afternoon."

Before baby, I scoffed loudly at both her comments. After baby, I'm lucky if my hair gets more than a swipe

But nobody told me breastfeeding hurt in the first week – though they did tell me about the soothing effect of Savoy cabbage. So there I was with cabbage leaves in my cups.

Most of all, I was completely unprepared for the emotional turmoil, the feeling of unconditional love and the panic of just not knowing what to do. The hospital, for all its excellent service, didn't tell me. There I was, a 32-year-old, who has travelled the world and lived life, confused by some-thing that is 21 inches long and weighs 9lbs.

Reality hit big time when Carys was three weeks old

wasn't easy. A local photographer did the pictures – she looked like a Muppet.

On the safety front, I spoke to four doctors, three health visitors, a couple of midwives and loads of airlines. All seemed to think I wasn't totally insane, so I opted to take her along.

I decided not to try to be Supermum and took a friend, "Nanny Rick", to help out. Carys was carried in a papoose in front of me, so we could transfer everywhere together.

She got her first experience of an athletics stadium and I achieved my slowest time in the 1500 metres since I was 12. But over the week, my speed improved enough in the 400 metres for me to qualify for the World Championships in July.

I haven't lost that competitive streak – I train for 2 hours a day on the roads and that's going up to 4 hours next week.

But in the last six weeks I have changed, and it's not just that I eat twice as much as I used to and get through the chocolate biscuits.

My friends and family have noticed a difference.

But when I ask them how, they still can't answer. Hopefully, it's for the better.



© GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

Baby love: Tanni and Ian let Carys get a bit of sleep

**'I count myself lucky if my hair gets more than a swipe with a brush, and feel I deserve a medal every day I get us both up and dressed while it's still morning'**

with a brush, and feel I deserve a medal every day I get us both up and dressed while it's still morning. I don't always achieve that.

I knew about morning sickness, but not that it could go on for five months and even after birth. I knew about the sleepless nights, nappies and snotty noses and was largely prepared thanks to a niece and three god-daughters.

and training started again. Just to be awkward, it happened to coincide with a squad training camp in Spain. After all, my husband Ian is national coach and I am always up for a challenge.

Before Carys, it seemed ideal. But now... should I or shouldn't I? What could go wrong?

Added to this, she needed a passport of her own and this

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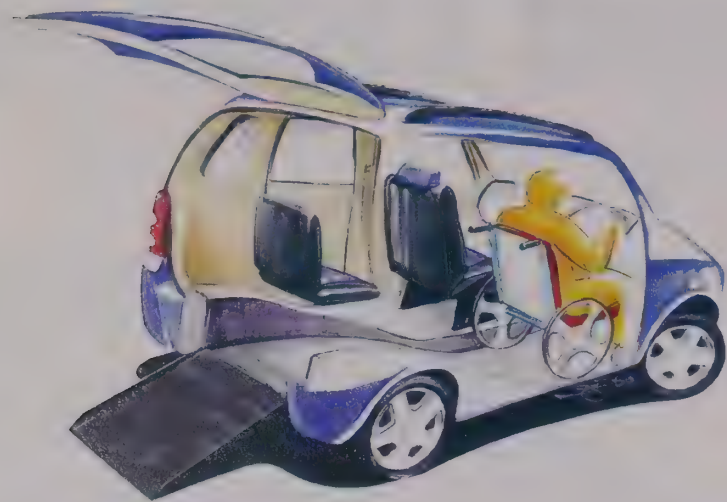
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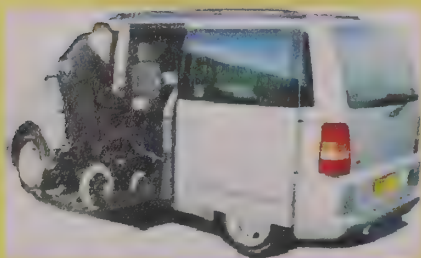


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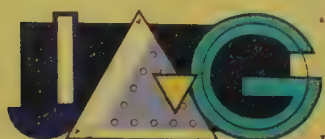


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# Heaven on earth

Adam Thomas takes a look at the product paradise on offer at this year's Ideal Home Show

**T**he Ideal Home Show is as eager to please as a boisterous puppy. It tries to cater for every taste – from “concept products” by hip design graduates, to a life-size English village, complete with rectory, thatched cottage and medieval tower.

There's plenty to see and do – sink into that overstuffed sofa, bounce on that “Tudor” canopy bed, gawp at the celebrities (“Don't look now, but is that Carole Smillie?”).

It's huge, colourful, noisy and exhausting. There's a crèche, loads of seats and lots of watering and feeding holes. Access is OK – though an automatic door at the front would be good; much more could be done for people with visual and hearing impairments; and my heart always sinks when I see that old, slow stair lift for the first half-flight into the halls.

The hard sell has accelerated over the years. Many staff are on commission and quite aggressive in their sales technique, calling, even pulling you over as you pass. You feel like you're in the



Relax: Agnes likes the swivelly Swopper chair (£365 + £29.99 delivery), Furniture Craft, tel: 020 8961 7780, [www.furniturecraft.com](http://www.furniturecraft.com)

[smg@smginternational.co.uk](mailto:smg@smginternational.co.uk)  
Prices are around £50-£150 with lots of show specials.

There is a dizzying array of health products claiming results of almost Lourdes-like

and 12-14p a day to run. It's padded all over and you can buy booster seats to help get in and out. I'd need a hoist to use it but the thought of relaxing in bubbling warm water – having had only showers since 1988 – was very appealing. Tel: 01494 441600, [www.tubsrus.co.uk](http://www.tubsrus.co.uk)

One gadget I took to was the Garlic Genius, which grinds garlic like a pepper grinder, allowing you to store what you don't use. It requires less gripping power and fine movement than a standard crusher and comes with a garlic peeler. “No smelly fingers!” our demonstrator bellowed cheerfully. It normally retails at £20 but is £14.99 at the show. It can also do shallots, onions, carrots and ginger.

Genius UK, tel: 020 8997 1854, [www.garlicgenius.co.uk](http://www.garlicgenius.co.uk)

On from the pong, we looked at the Siesta Air Cleaner from Space Air Solutions, which gives you “clean air at the push of a button”. It deals with cigarettes, cat hair, dust and pollen and is operated by remote control. It costs £269 at the show, and simply plugs in. Tel: 01483 252 240, email: [solutions@spaceair.co.uk](mailto:solutions@spaceair.co.uk)

Adam Thomas is a kitchen designer at Design Matters, tel: 01628 531584, [www.dmkbb.co.uk](http://www.dmkbb.co.uk)

**'The hard sell has accelerated over the years. You feel like you're in the Amsterdam red light district or a Moroccan market'**

Amsterdam red light district or a Moroccan market.

Nowhere is this more true than in the Fashion & Bodycare section. You must keep moving. If you falter – as, say, some bright bauble catches your eye – you will be grabbed, buffed, bewigged and possibly depilated to within an inch of your life. And that's just the men.

We decided to have some fun with the “hair accessories” – that's wigs to you, me and Joan Collins. The special exhibition prices tempted my wife Agnes, but by the time you've had an American tan stocking and half a shag-pile carpet pulled over your real hair, it's difficult to feel glamorous. Some of the wigs did look surprisingly real. There were lots of fun ones too, in neon pink and electric blue. Strange, but the photos of me in “Candy”, “Chill” and “Tamzin” – flame, hot pink and mauve – seem to have vanished. SMG International, tel: 0131 448 0505, email:

proportions. Acupressure eye massagers, orgasmatrons (no, really, it's “head massage”), pills, creams and potions.

The BioFlow range offers a variety of magnetic wrist accessories, promising to help with 25 separate conditions, from tiredness and respiration problems to obesity. Not bad for a copper bracelet! Ecoflow, £16-£102, tel: 0114 288 6684.

Great if it works for you, but Ag and I were not too happy at being chased up and down the aisles by a saleswoman, cheerily yelling “You've obviously both got problems!” Catching sight of Ag's crutch and my wheelchair, she was clearly in niche market nirvana.

By contrast, the displays at Tubs R Us – “home hydrotherapy” – looked inviting and the sales staff were knowledgeable and realistic about the benefits. The Softub, a round, leather-look spa with no hard edges, costs £3,000-£4,000 (including installation)

Earls Court, Warwick Road, London SW5, until 1 April. Open 10am to 8pm (Thursdays until 10pm; 1 April until 6pm). Adult weekday price: £10.50, concessions: (5-16 year olds and over-60s) £7; weekend: £12.50, concessions: £8. Advance ticket hotline (no minicom!), tel: 0870 606 6080.



Food, glorious food: Adam feasts his eyes at the Corner Fridge Company stand, tel: 07778 633941, [www.cornerfridge.com](http://www.cornerfridge.com)

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## Film

## I Am Sam

In *I Am Sam*, Sean Penn plays a single father with a learning disability. His daughter Lucy has reached the point where she is overtaking him intellectually, asking awkward questions about his disability.

When the authorities take Lucy into care, he engages hard-nosed lawyer Rita Harrison (Michelle Pfeiffer) to help him. Sam makes a poor witness, and when the foster mother decides to push for adoption, it looks like he's really in trouble. But everything comes right in the end: Sam gets to keep Lucy, and Rita discovers her human side through Sam.

This is one of the most unbelievable movies I have ever seen. It makes it easy on itself all the way through. From the moment Lucy's mother conveniently walks out immediately after the birth, to the point where the foster mother conveniently decides that Lucy needs to be with Sam, this movie ducks out of the hard work of characterisation and minor plotting that would lead us to accept key plot points.

The root problem is that the film doesn't trust learning disabled people enough to let Sam be a true protagonist. He doesn't make things happen. He doesn't fight to be a father; the mother just walks off. He doesn't persuade the lawyer to take on his case *pro bono*; someone else accidentally



Sam sham: Pfeiffer and Penn in a disappointing film

embarrasses her into it. And we don't see Sam persuade anyone that he should keep his child; it just happens.

These issues are important, but they need a better film than this to discuss them.

Allan Sutherland

## Art

## Saving Faces



The National Portrait Gallery is currently showing over 30 paintings by the acclaimed Mark Gilbert.

The project, *Saving Faces*, was set up by Iain Hutchison to establish an artist-in-residence within his surgical department, which mainly repairs and rebuilds badly damaged faces.

The idea was to "show that people with a facial disability are able to enjoy happy, successful and fulfilled lives"



Mazeeda (pre-operation)

and to explore potential benefits for the sitters.

The paintings are arresting. Against the one-colour background with a

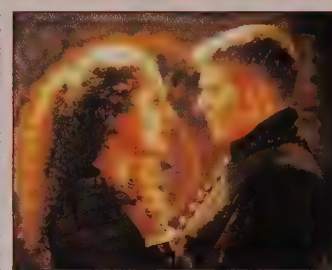
series of seemingly loose, broad brushstrokes, Gilbert conjures up a strong emotional presence. This suggests a high degree of mutual respect between artist and sitter on which the exhibition's success rests.

However, and sadly, the presentation was very medical, which I found to be old-fashioned, voyeuristic and patronising: simply inappropriate in this setting.

Adam Reynolds

Until 21 April, tel: 020 7306 0055, free. Leeds City Art Gallery, July-Aug 2002; Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, Sept-Oct 2002.

## Theatre



Romeo and Juliet

Chicken Shed are a music-theatre company of amateur actors run by a professional production team with a policy of inclusivity – several members of the cast of *Romeo and Juliet* are people with disabilities. However, it is disappointing that the disabled cast members are only included in minor roles, in a production which lacks real magic.

The most exciting and successful element of this production is the setting of sections of the verse to music. The band is excellent and invigorating and when Romeo (Andrew Martin) sings, you connect with the passion of the piece in a way lacking in most of the non-musical sections.

As an acting ensemble, the cast plays with total commitment, and Michael Offei as Friar Lawrence is outstanding.

It is hard to match artistic director Mary Ward's aspiration to "create original music theatre by drawing out the essence of each and every performer", particularly when the disabled performers feel so peripheral to the production. This *Romeo and Juliet* feels conventional and imitative rather than truly original.

Ewan Marshall

## Coming up

Graeae's *Peeling* runs 3-13 April at the Soho Theatre, London. This darkly comic play is about the choices women make and the things they hide. See DN review next month. Tel: 020 7478 0100, [www.sohotheatre.com](http://www.sohotheatre.com)

DARE, by the Theatre Workshop, questions the assumption of some genetic researchers that the world would be better without disabled people. Featuring Nabil Shaban and Jim McSharry, it runs 11-13 April at Jacksons Lane, Highgate, London, tel: 020 8341 4421.

Works by disabled artists will be on view at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, in cADWyn, a project set up by Arts Disability Wales. They are also freely available as postcards at venues across Wales. 6-12 April, tel/minicom: 029 2055 1040, email: [arts.disability@enablis.co.uk](mailto:arts.disability@enablis.co.uk)



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Adam Thomas, a wheelchair user since 1981, has 20 years professional experience of access issues. He designed both kitchens at the Disabled Living Foundation.

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## TV



I love *City Hospital* (BBC1). Matthew Kelly is fab and the whole show is so upbeat and positive – hard to believe all those NHS scare stories when you see what goes on at Guy's and St Thomas' in London. The remarkably chipper John Gilpin is in the *Guinness Book of Records* since polio 47 years ago means an artificial respirator is his best friend – apart from his wife that is.

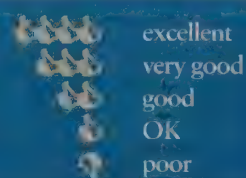
I don't suppose stem cell research (ITV1's *Tonight with Trevor McDonald*) will do much for John or for Christopher Reeve but we live in hope. Whilst John and Christopher are unable to control their bodies, John Davidson (*The Boy Can't Help It*, BBC1) can't control his mouth because of Tourette's syndrome. Again John was cheerful in the face of this socially stigmatising condition, as was eight-year-old Greg (and his classmates) who dealt with his frustratingly frequent tics with great fortitude.

Described elsewhere as a "distortion" of the life of mathematician John Nash, Russell Crowe's portrayal in *A Brilliant Mind* was applauded on C4's *Richard and Judy* by Emma, who herself has schizophrenia.

The BBC is probably congratulating itself on *All About Me* – a kind of Oxo family for the 21st century complete with unlikely pairing of Meera Syal and Jasper Carrott plus assorted offspring. Powerchair user Raj uses a voiceover to tell us what's what. This new "sitcom" is hailed as a breakthrough for disabled people. If you ask me there's an "h" missing...

With *The Office* having won so many gongs already, it's amazing that BBC suits were caught with their ramps down again on 2001 *TV Moments*. Once again Ash Atalla (a wheelchair user) was unable to access the podium – well, he's only the producer after all. They need a monster rant from Alexei Sayle who has a go at non-disabled people parking in disabled bays on BBC2's *Room 101*. Tell me about it.

Jane Shepherd



excellent  
very good  
good  
OK  
poor



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ILLUSTRATION BY CLARE CURTIS

# Dear Ann

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

Ann Dambrough, who is disabled herself, is co-author of the *Directory for Disabled People* and other guides. Write to her at *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or email your problem to [editor@disabilitynow.org.uk](mailto:editor@disabilitynow.org.uk)



## How long for a home?

I live in Bury, Lancashire, and have been on their housing list for 16 years. They say they can't find suitable accommodation for me as a wheelchair user. My present home is very damp and I cannot use my kitchen properly.

I have written to my MP, but I don't think he is able to make much progress. All this is making me ill and I don't know what to do next.

Mary, Bury

I think it's outrageous that you have waited 16 years for suitable accommodation, but there are more things you could try.

Go to your MP's surgery. A face-to-face talk can often achieve more than a letter. You could also contact your local councillor, who should be very concerned about your treatment and could speak direct to the housing department.

Find out if you have a disability organisation nearby. It will be glad to take up your case and put pressure on the local authority.

Whatever your disability, there will be a national organisation which will be able to tell you if they have a local branch. They could also help you fight your case.

You need to contact as many people as possible and keep up the pressure on the housing authority.

## Cash holds me back

I have osteoporosis and acute osteoarthritis. Over the last year I have improved greatly thanks to exercise at my local physiotherapy department. Now my GP has referred me to the local community centre with a prescription for fitness. This would be fine, but the twice-weekly regime costs me £4.80 an hour plus taxi fares. I do have disability living allowance, but that pays for other taxi journeys that I need.

I don't want my health to take a backward step.

Christine, Chester le Street  
Are you sure you are getting all

the financial benefits to which you are entitled? It is worth asking your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

It may also be worth enquiring whether the community centre reduces its charges for disabled people.

Are you in touch with Arthritis Care? While it is unlikely that they would be able to help you financially, they may be able to give you details of funding organisations that might help.

## Driving force

I read about the "she-devil on wheels" (DN, January) and

greatly admire the 86-year-old woman who enjoys driving.

I am 76 and severely disabled. Until my husband had a heart attack, he drove us everywhere. I was determined not to be stranded up the Welsh mountain where we live and vowed to learn to drive. I passed my test first time.

I would recommend driving to everyone. The feeling of independence is wonderful.

Fay, Powys

I'm sure readers will be greatly encouraged. I look forward to hearing of others who have achieved something new in their lives.

**Arthritis Care**, 18 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2HD, helpline: 0808 800 4050.

**DIAL**, Central Library, Victoria Square, St Helens WA10 1DY, tel: 01744 453053.

**Hidradenitis Suppuratavia Support Group**, 207 Fernhill Road, Bootle, Merseyside 20 0AG, tel: 0799 077 6168.

**National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux**, Myddelton House, 115/123 Pentonville Road, London N1 9LZ, tel: 020 7833 2181.

**National Autistic Society**, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG, helpline: 0870 600 8585.

**Scope**, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, helpline: 0808 800 3333.

## Help me help myself

I have autism and cerebral palsy and need advice. Social services can't seem to sort things out for me. In fact, they have made me more helpless by not letting me cope with my own difficulties. They gave me a flat, but I can't pay the rent.

I don't know what to do.

Sue, St Helens

I am sorry to hear of your problems. I am sure you would benefit from talking to a qualified person who could advise you face to face.

Visit your local Disability Information Advice Line (DIAL) – also known as Disability Advice and Information St Helens (DASH). You will find people there who will understand your situation and

who will be glad to advise you of financial benefits to which you are entitled and the services which could help you. They would be able to tell you how you can pay your rent.

Have you been in touch with the National Autistic Society or Scope? Both charities have helplines.

## Seeking support

Is there a group for people with hidradenitis suppuratavia? I need advice about financial benefits.

Gwyn, email

After some digging, I have come up with the Hidradenitis Suppuratavia Support Group.

It is certainly important to check you are receiving the right benefits. You might also be eligible for partial exemption from prescription charges. You can also save money by getting prepayment certificates, which help if you need frequent prescriptions. Try the Citizens Advice Bureau too. They will be able to assist you.

## Help at the end of the phone



DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick gives disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor and Methodist local preacher, with a postgraduate diploma in homeopathic medicine. If you have something you need to discuss in confidence, talk to her on Mondays 6pm-10pm and Thursdays 1pm-5pm, tel: 01787 882111.



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# On the road to employment

One of the many services that Scope provides is in employment and training where a team of Employment Officers, who work across England and Wales, help hundreds of disabled people retain or gain full-time employment. Through Scope's Employment Services disabled people can find advice, support and a range of services to help them find gainful employment in their chosen fields of work. Two services that Scope provides, through government-run programmes, are WORKSTEP (part of the Supported Employment Programme) and the JobBroker service.

## WORKSTEP – Working towards creating a more integrated workforce

In April 2001 the Supported Employment Programme became known as WORKSTEP. The aim of the new programme is to assist disabled people to move into paid employment that matches their skills, aspirations, experience and professional qualifications. Scope is the third biggest provider of WORKSTEP and support is given through a team of Employment Officers, each working in a specific geographical area.

## Profile – Julie Harrison, Employment Officer for WORKSTEP



Julie Harrison is a Scope Employment Officer who works in the Merseyside area and has been working

at Scope for four years.

Initially, Julie is referred people from the Disability Employment Adviser at the Job Centre who decides whether the person is eligible for WORKSTEP.

Julie says: "Once we have received a referral we arrange to meet the person and carry out a vocational profile to explore the person's aspirations and abilities and a development plan is then drawn up. We work very closely with the person seeking employment who obviously has to take a very active role in the job search."

Once a profile has been carried out an Employment Officer helps in looking for the right job. When a suitable vacancy is found an Employment Officer can also provide practical support by assisting with job applications

and interview preparation. Once the job is accepted, support is offered to both the employee and employer (including supervisors and work colleagues).

Julie says, "The service we provide has helped hundreds of people to find successful and fulfilling work. The programme provides a variety of supporting skills helping people to enter into a fully integrated working environment."

## Entering employment

Iain Taylor signed up with WORKSTEP after leaving university early following a diagnosis of dyslexia. After six months on the scheme Iain found the job he was looking for as an IT technician at a further education college.

Iain says, "I was very disappointed that I had to leave university early and was concerned I wouldn't be able to find a job that interested me. With WORKSTEP I have found a job that really interests me. I start in a couple of weeks and I am very excited about the possibilities this has given me."

Iain continues, "WORKSTEP is an invaluable tool to help people build a track record in employment. Once you have had your first job and proven you have the skills employers want this becomes more important than your disability."

## JOBBROKER – matching the job to your skills

The JobBroker service is a new voluntary programme based in Brighton and Hove which assists disabled people and those with health issues who wish to enter or re-enter work.



## Fiona Craig explores some of the options on offer from the national disability organisation Scope

As the term "JobBroking" suggests the service involves Employment Officers (JobBrokers) matching people who have registered with the service to appropriate jobs. The service includes working with individuals to highlight their skills, identifying types of suitable work, assisting with jobsearch skills (CVs, application forms, interviews) and providing support whilst in work.

As well as assisting in finding work the JobBroker service also provides information and guidance on applying for various in-work benefits and incentives, and provides a weekly job club enabling people to use the centre's resources.

## Profile – Barry Scutt, JobBroker

Barry Scutt is a JobBroker who has been with Scope since the beginning of the new scheme in August 2001.

People are referred to JobBroker in a number of ways, primarily self-referral, and an initial interview is set up to discuss the options. If the candidate is considered suitable they are then registered with the service.

Once an assessment has been carried out Barry helps the candidate to look for a position. He will look for work using the local employment sources, whilst the candidate looks independently.

Barry continues, "We provide people with the tools to actively seek employment themselves. We are totally voluntary and offer free advice to empower people to achieve their employment goals."

"An important part of our service is helping disabled people to regain their social

and economic independence and regain their self-confidence."

## Supporting the local community

Clive is a 62-year old who left work due to ill health. After a break of two years Clive wanted to go back to work. JobBroker gave Clive the support and encouragement he needed to apply for a new job and he has now been a yacht broker since October.

Clive says: "I wanted to go back to work but I was worried that at my age no-one would employ me. JobBroker gave me the courage I needed to apply for positions. Now I'm happily working as a yacht broker. Getting back to work has



played a major part in my recovery and given me back my confidence."

The JobBroker service also helped Clive's wife Mary, who left her job as an educational psychologist due to ill health and after a three-year break found a new position but was worried and confused about re-entering the work environment.

Mary says, "JobBroker gave me the support I needed for the first few months of work advising me on how to deal with situations at work I was unsure about. The help they have given to both me and my family has been wonderful. They even sent me a congratulations letter after my first six months of work, which really boosted me."

## JobBroker

To find out more about the JobBroker scheme contact Scope's JobBroker service: Link Place, Off Upper Hollingdean Road, Brighton, BN1 7GA, Tel: 01273 542803/Fax: 01273 330576 email: [job.broker@scope.org.uk](mailto:job.broker@scope.org.uk)

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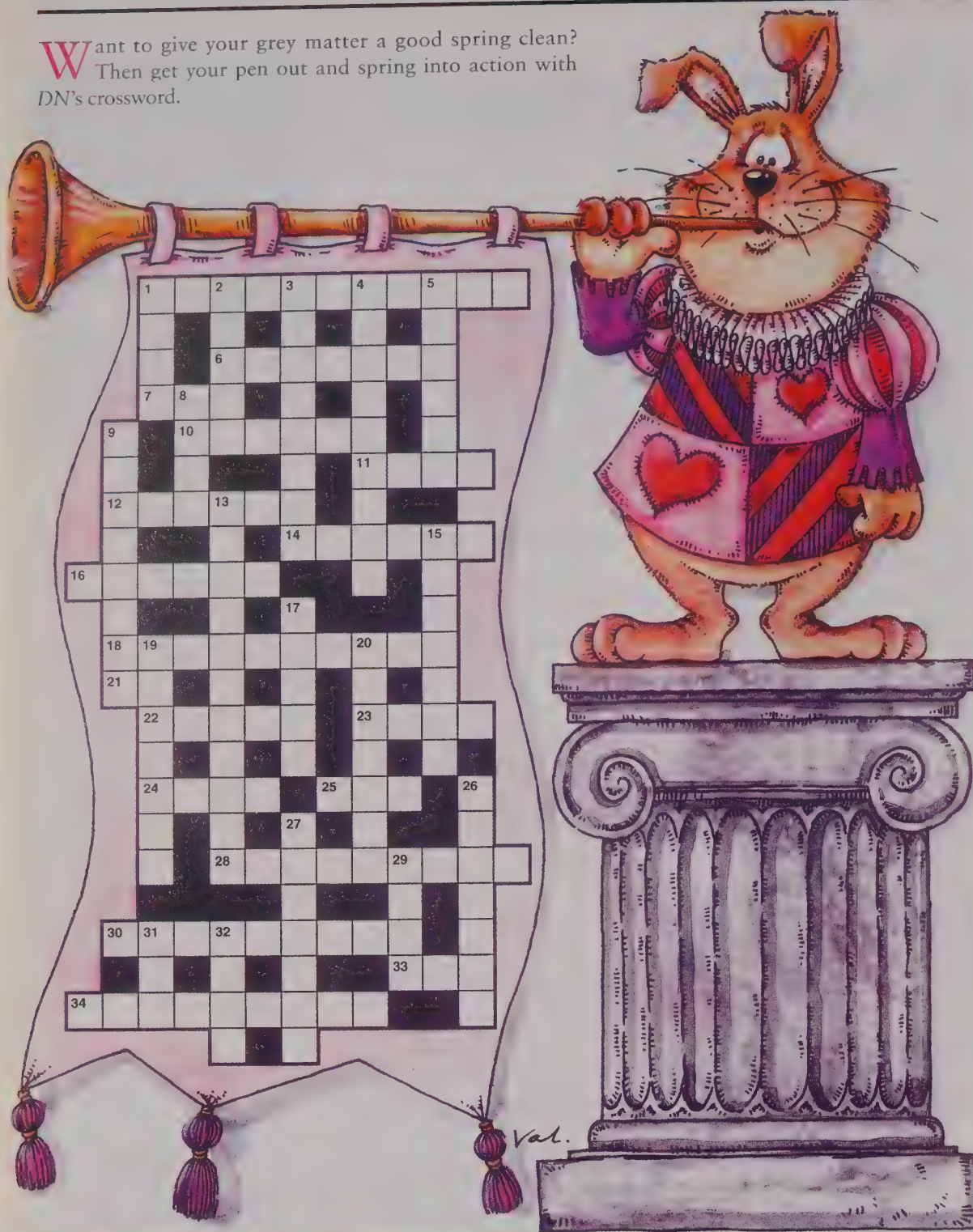
## WORKSTEP

To find out more about the WORKSTEP scheme please contact Scope's Cambridgeshire office at: Scope, Sterling House, 10b Harding Way, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs PE27 3WR.

Tel: 01480 309 615/Fax: 01480 309 636



Want to give your grey matter a good spring clean? Then get your pen out and spring into action with DN's crossword.



## ACROSS

1. Another way to describe Easter Monday on 1 April (4,7)
6. Small, soft flowers on willows and hazels, for example (7)
7. Fifth note of the major scale in tonic sol-fa (7)
10. This saint's day falls on 23 April (6)
11. Plant yielding edible flour and oil (4)
12. *Aide, Der Rosenkavalier* and *The Magic Flute* (6)
14. They are found inside Easter eggs (6)
16. Spring-flowering plants with cup-shaped flowers (6)
18. Spring delicacies (6,4)
21. Nazi special police force (2)
22. Name of book or poem (5)
23. Madrid football team (4)
24. The Duke of Wellington was known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Duke (4)
25. Spring month (3)
28. Spring plants with white, drooping flowers (9)
30. For Muslims, the holiest city after Mecca and Medina (9)
33. Hole of a needle (3)
34. Mass of dislodged snow sliding rapidly down a mountain (9)

## DOWN

1. See 3 Down.
2. Shallow recess in a wall (5)
3. And 1 down. These are eaten on Good Friday (3,5,4)
4. Football team supported by Gary Lineker (9)
5. Mickey Mouse creator (6)
8. Man-eating giant in folklore (4)
9. Dwarf spring-flowering plants with yellow, purple or white flowers (8)
13. Ways in which people are regarded (11)
15. Pancakes are tossed on Shrove \_\_\_\_\_ (7)
17. Colour of fresh growth in spring (5)
19. Male star of the film *Easter Parade*... (7)
20. ...and its female star (7)
26. Planet revolving in orbit between the orbits of Mars and Saturn (7)
27. It is celebrated on Valentine's day (7)
29. Italy's Eternal City (4)
31. Period of time (3)
32. US state associated with the Mormons (4)

CROSSWORD BY JIM MCLAREN  
ILLUSTRATION BY VALERIE BARR  
ANSWERS ON PAGE 40

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## Candid Dan

DJ Dan gets ready to light some fires from his burning decks

Having participated in various artistic ventures over the years, including acting, writing and painting my flat, I've always enjoyed getting my creative juices flowing. But, as a drummer whose talents extend to holding down a basic 4/4 rhythm with a few dodgy tom tom fills thrown in, my musical ambitions have always been somewhat frustrated.

But now I've been given a chance, of sorts, to display my musical "skills". DN's former layout sub and *tunemeister extraordinaire* Dave has requested that I be a DJ at a party he's holding for a friend. He plans to put me on for an hour in the middle of the evening, to give things a big shake up and get people moving after his planned sedate start to proceedings. Although this endorsement shows that my leanings towards funk and reggae are appreciated (as the owners of my local record shop will attest), I have been warned that any attempt to play anything from my equally favoured metal genre will be met with a boot towards the door. The revelation that I will be playing CDs rather than the DJ's choice of vinyl LPs did momentarily raise some DJ snobbery and call into question my validity behind "the decks", but the issues were quickly resolved. Dave knows a class act when he hears one.

Also on the artistic front, I have been asked to address a class of media studies students at my old sixth form college, along with partner in grime Ian, on filmmaking. I was collared in the middle of the street by my 'A' level media studies tutor and asked if I would mind showing off our film, *Charlie*, to her students. Of course I said yes, but the most stunning thing was that she was still teaching the same subject 12 years on, and still has vivid memories of my sitting in her class. I'm not sure if the scars have healed yet or not, but it'll be nice to go "back home" for a while.

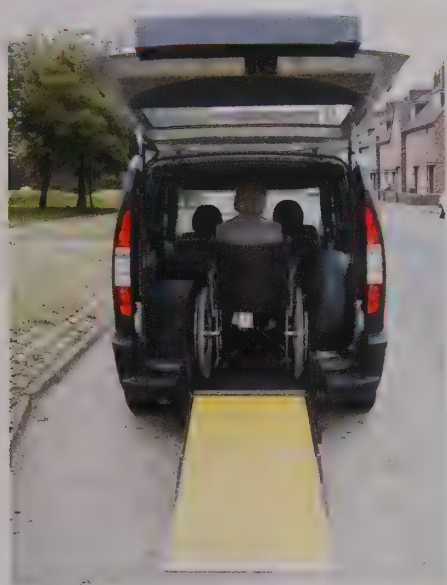


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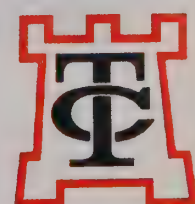
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Among the gadgets and gizmos on show are the Pillow Perfect bed raiser from RBF Healthcare, a lightweight portable aid for anyone who needs help to sit up or lie down in bed.

There is also a new day chair from Careflex which has a water-based pressure management system to help avoid discomfort when you're sitting for long periods.

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This year, for the



first time, the Disabled Living Foundation will be running a helpdesk giving advice and information on equipment available to aid independent living, as well as handing out directions.

There will be free seminars, including one on moving and handling for carers, and Day's Medical Aids will be running a prize draw for a DMA scooter (above).

DN is sharing Stand 440 with Talking Newspapers Enterprises, so make sure you come along and say hello. To get a free ticket, call the ticket hotline, tel: 0870 429 4428, or visit the website [www.naidex.co.uk](http://www.naidex.co.uk) for more information.

Dan Batten

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## • Publications

### The Cerebral Palsy

**Helpline**, run by Scope, has a new range of free leaflets giving information to parents of children with cerebral palsy. Titles include *What is Cerebral Palsy* and *Your Rights and Benefits*. For information, tel: 0808 800 3333, email: [cphelpline@scope.org.uk](mailto:cphelpline@scope.org.uk)

**The Disability Alliance** has published the 27th edition of the *Disability Rights Handbook*, a guide to disability benefits and services. £13 (£9 if you are on benefits). For details, tel/minicom: 020 7247 8776.

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS

**ACROSS:** 1. Bank Holiday  
6. Catkins 7. Soh  
10. George 11. Soya  
12. Operas 14. Sweets  
16. Tulips 18. Easter eggs  
21. SS 22. Title 23. Real  
24. Iron 25. May  
28. Snowdrops 30. Jerusalem  
33. Eye 34. Avalanche

**DOWN:** 1. Buns 2. Niche  
3. Hot Cross 4. Leicester  
5. Disney 8. Ogre 9. Crocuses  
13. Reputations 15. Tuesday  
17. Green 19. Astaire  
20. Garland 26. Jupiter  
27. Romance 29. Rome  
31. Era 32. Utah







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## • Recruitment (on pages 42 to 46)

## NATIONAL ORGANISER – REMAP

*Part-time. Salary £15k – 20k negotiable*

**REMAP** is a national charity whose volunteers make custom-designed aids and equipment for people with disabilities. Due to retirement, it seeks to appoint a National Organiser to promote the aims of the charity and to co-ordinate the work of some 100 local Panels. The post is part-time (3 days/week) and based in Sevenoaks, Kent. The successful candidate will be expected to travel extensively using his/her motor vehicle, for which mileage allowances will be paid. A demonstrated management track record and an ability to communicate effectively with engineers, therapists, funding bodies and other disability organisations are essential. Experience in the charity sector would be an advantage. The post will become vacant in the Autumn but a preliminary period of dual running with the present post-holder is anticipated.

Applications, with brief CV, should be sent by Friday May 3rd 2002 to: The Chairman of Trustees, REMAP, Hazeldene, Ightham, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 9AD

Interviews in London on Friday May 17<sup>th</sup> 2002.

## DISABILITY ADVICE SERVICE LAMBETH

## Direct Payments Project Worker

35 hours per week. Salary SO1  
(starting at £22,416 pa inc ILW)

DASL is an established voluntary organisation which offers a range of advice and information services to disabled people in Lambeth. We are funded by Lambeth Social Services to give independent support to disabled and older people and others who are eligible to use the Direct Payments scheme. You will join our existing worker to offer:

- Information and advice to potential direct payments users
- Advocacy and support for clients in their dealings with Social Services
- User training and advice in areas such as recruiting and employing personal assistants and managing finances
- Opportunities for users to meet together and share experiences
- Ideas to help develop and improve the scheme

We are looking for someone with knowledge of community care services and employment matters. You should also have worked with disabled or older people in a paid or unpaid capacity.

For an application pack, contact David Strong, DASL, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA Tel: 020 7642 0040 Email: intheknowaccord@dial.pipex.com

Closing date: 16 April 2002

*DASL is an Equal Opportunities employer. We welcome applications from all sections of the community and particularly from disabled people. Our premises are fully accessible.*

## Conditions

Disability Now maintains the right to amend or withdraw lineage adverts without prior notice. All adverts must comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice.

Telephone numbers and addresses will not be placed in personal adverts, for confidentiality. Instead, Box numbers will be provided. Likewise, telephone numbers and addresses will not be given out over the telephone if requested.

Box Numbers can be requested for non-personal adverts. However, it may limit the response to it. If you want to advertise documents, goods or services contact Patrick Durham-Matthews (tel: 020 7619 7320), fax: 020 7619 7331.

Lineage adverts can only be used by private individuals. All commercial enquiries must be addressed to Richard Gresham (see contact details above).

DN cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage of adverts or letters during forwarding. It is the responsibility of the advertiser to check the content of their advert, and to ensure any abbreviations cannot be misunderstood.



• Recruitment (on pages 42 to 46)

## Disability Action Waltham Forest

Independent Living Advocate – Salary £21,177 incl. OLW

Wanted: For a new and exciting post working to enable people to live in the community. Our vacancy is for an independent Living Advocate for Older People and People with Learning Impairments – 36 hours per week, Salary £21,177.00p incl Outer London Weighting per annum, 28 days holiday a year. This is a 3 year project funded by the Community Fund.

We are looking for a person to work alongside our Independent Living Worker. You will be experienced in working with people with learning impairments in a multi ethnic environment, have worked in an advocacy role whether paid or unpaid have a good knowledge of the legislation that is relevant to living independently in the community and be able to apply it in your work and be able to make your work accessible to all disabled people in our community.

So if you think you can fit into the role please get in touch for an application pack.

Ring Pat or Nafees at Disability Action Waltham Forest, ON (voice) 020 8509 0812, (text) 020 8521 4287, (fax) 020 8521 7203.

Email: [wfadabhabha@cs.com](mailto:wfadabhabha@cs.com)

Or write to Pat Bhabha, Disability Action, 1A Warner Road, Walthamstow, E17 7DY.

**COMMUNITY FUND**

Applications must be in our office by 5pm on Friday 26th April 2002. All disabled people meeting our essential criteria will be interviewed.

## Contact a Family

Contact a Family is a UK-wide charity helping families who care for children with any disability or special need. We have an exciting programme of rapid expansion.

### FINANCE OFFICER

**£16,375 - £17,328 for 28 hr/wk**  
(full time equivalent £20,469 - £21,660)

We need someone to administer and process our financial records and support our Finance Manager. At least two years' experience of financial and administrative work is essential.

Download further details and an application form from [www.cafamily.org.uk/financeofficer.html](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/financeofficer.html) or write to Debbie Bunyan, Contact a Family, 209-211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN or e-mail: [reception@cafamil.org.uk](mailto:reception@cafamil.org.uk)

Closing date: 12.04.02

Interviews: 30.04.02

Registered Charity No. 284912

• Dancing Auditions

**blueyedsoul dance .com**

Blue Eyed Soul Dance Company, one of the leading integrated dance companys, are holding auditions for their next production *Frankenstein*, which will be directed by Liam Steel, (ex DV8).

Auditions are open to all disabled and non-disabled dancers and take place in Shrewsbury on Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd April 2002. Devising week will be W/C 6th May and Rehearsals will take place from 22nd July – 16th August inclusive. Touring nationally from October 2002.

For further information, please contact Rachel Freeman, Artistic Director, 01743 245998, or email us at [blue-eyed-soul@fsmail.net](mailto:blue-eyed-soul@fsmail.net)

We are a national disability organisation whose focus is people with cerebral palsy. Our aim is that disabled people achieve equality: a society in which they are as valued and have the same human and civil rights as everyone else.

**SCOPE**  
1952-2002  
FIFTY YEARS

## Marketing PA/Administrator

Salary: Scale 5 - £15144 - £17172 plus £2588 (Inner London Weighting). Location: Head Office, London N7. Hours: 35 hours per week.

We are looking for an experienced and efficient administrator to provide secretarial and administrative support to the Executive Director of Marketing.

You will have experience of working for a senior manager in a busy office environment, the ability to work effectively in a team, react to changing priorities and to work on your own initiative.

Excellent interpersonal and organisational skills are required, together with computer literacy (Word, Excel and Powerpoint software). You will need experience in information gathering, analysis and report production and a good knowledge of office systems and practice and basic accounting procedures.

To apply please contact Chris Buck, Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW. Tel: 020 7619 7183. Fax: 020 7619 7399. Email: [marketing.pa@scope.org.uk](mailto:marketing.pa@scope.org.uk)

Closing date for applications: 18 April 2002.

Interviews will be held towards the end of April.

**We are committed to equal opportunities and we encourage applications from disabled people.**

Find out more about us at [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

Registered charity no 208231

• For Sale

## PRE-OWNED & DEMONSTRATOR WAV'S FOR SALE

Mercedes Vito 108Cdi, '01, 6K miles, Orchid Green WAV, lowered floor rear entrance with ramp, 3 rear passenger seats, Unwin Solo wheelchair & passenger restraints Cost New £18,985 Sell £17,985  
VW Caravelle 2.4D, '96 N, red. Lowering suspension, tip up forward facing rear seats, lowered rear access. £9,975  
VW Transporter SWB 1.9TD '95 M, Green, WAV Conversion, 4 Pass Driver & Wheel Chair. £8,975  
Fiat Ulysse 2.0EL, R reg, 50k miles. Lowered floor with ramp. Driver 3 Pass + Wheelchair, PAS, twin sunroofs, climate control & electric windows. £10,995  
Skoda Cube 1.9D, WAV, '98 R, 42k miles, full lowered floor conversion. £6,975  
Renault Kangoo 1.2P WAV, '99 T, 12K miles, full lowered floor conversion. £8,495  
Renault Traffic Prima 1.7P, WAV, '93 L, 41k miles, 1 wheelchair + Driver & 4 Pass. Widnes conversion. £3,795  
Fiat Fiorino 1.7D '94 L. White WAV. £3,750

New or ex-demo Renault Kangoo WAVs – call for prices and spec'.

Wheelchair Accessible Motorhome, 2/3 Berth designed from new for disabled person use.

Base vehicle Mercedes 312D Auto '98 R. Remote Control rear doors & Ricon lift. Electric 6 way drivers seat. Plus host of other adaptations. Cost New £45,000. Please call for full specification & price.

All the above vehicles come with our Comprehensive Used Vehicle Warranty

95 Bonnygate, Cupar, Fife KY15 4LG  
Tel: (01334) 657722, fax: (01334) 657711,  
e-mail: [sales@gleneaglesconversions.co.uk](mailto:sales@gleneaglesconversions.co.uk)  
website: [www.gleneaglesconversions.co.uk](http://www.gleneaglesconversions.co.uk)

**Gleneagles**  
Conversions Ltd

## WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES FOR SALE

1998 S Mercedes V Class, 15,000 miles.	£14,500
1998 R Mercedes Vito Chairman, 113 Auto, 40,000 miles	£12,500
1998 R Brotherwood Alhambra, Auto, 22,000 miles	£18,750
1996 N Transit, Semi Hi Roof. Tail lift, 24k miles	£8,750
1996 P Escort Chairman, 32,000 miles	£6,995
1994 M Metro Chairman, Auto, 27,000 miles	£4,495
Kangoo & Berlingo models	Choice of 7
Expert – Scudo – Dispatch models	Choice of 3
Traffic & Vanette Cango models	Choice of 11

A selection of 40 WAVs from £2,750 fully serviced with warranty. Demo and delivery anywhere in UK mainland free. Part exchange and vehicles sought for purchase.

**CLARKE MOBILITY**  
SNODLAND, KENT

01634 243596  
[www.gfclarke.com](http://www.gfclarke.com)

## freedom direct stairlifts and scooters



- unbeatable prices
- 4, 6 and 8mph, long range
- rent or buy from £7.50 per week
- new and reconditioned from £795
- powerchair specialists

**We guarantee to beat any new scooter price!**

**Free phone 0800 970 7954**

\*Subject to terms and conditions

• Business for sale

## For Sale Due to illness

[disabilitybenefits.co.uk](http://disabilitybenefits.co.uk)  
**the internet's no.1 disability web guide**  
£65,000 of annual advertising sales with massive expansion Potential  
**for sale at £69,995**  
**Tel: 01253 350001**

• Services

**ASPiRES** Sheltered Workshop people with disabilities can help **YOUR BUSINESS**

Call us for  
**ASSEMBLY & PACKAGING**  
and  
**MAIL SHOTS**  
Highly Competitive Rates

Tel/Fax: 01366 347721  
Chapel Farm, Fincham, PE33 9HF.

## INTERCARE COMMUNITY SERVICES

### WE CAN HELP!

Quality care provided within your own home by friendly, cheerful and energetic carers.

A full range of care can be provided. Please enquire for details. Short/Long term - 24 hour service.



Tel: 020 8333 7371  
Office hrs 07941975291  
Evenings/Weekends.

• Personal

**Handicate**  
Introduction Agency

For disabled and able-bodied people  
Established 1987

Tel: 01473 226950  
Fax: 01473 254030

E-mail: [handicate@btinternet.com](mailto:handicate@btinternet.com)  
Website: [www.handicate.com](http://www.handicate.com)

Freeport, Handicate, The Wellington Centre, 52 Chevallier Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2BR  
A member of ABIA

## COTSWOLD COTS

Build Cots and Beds for Adults and Children with Special Needs

We Design And Build Any Cot or Bed You Need.

**New Products** Extra Strong Playpens. Extra Large Stairgates. Fitted Padded Play Areas.

High Quality Fair prices  
Information Phone 01993 842885

## Accessible Vehicle Register

We specialise in locating used vehicles to suit the specific needs of our customers. If you are looking for an accessible vehicle or have one to dispose of, contact Adam Price. We also supply and install all forms of access equipment.

**01202 814112**  
[adam.price@lineone.net](mailto:adam.price@lineone.net)

**Powerchairs Mobility Consultants**  
New and Nearly New, Electric Wheelchairs, 3 and 4 Wheel Scooters. All models wanted and for sale.  
**Ring Free anytime**  
**0800 074 6834**  
All major credit cards accepted



Creating opportunities with disabled people

**LEONARD CHESHIRE****Disabled People's Forum**

We wish to recruit disabled people for the following positions. The Forum has a staff team of disabled people to provide mentoring, meetings and training opportunities for service users in residential care and in the community. A commitment to the Social Model of Disability & self-organisation of disabled people is essential in both posts.

**Mentor for Northeast & Yorkshire (open to job share)**  
**28 hours a week £18,000 pro rata of 35 hrs.**

Closing date for applications 12 April 2002  
 Interviews to be held in York 22 April 2002

Working from home 4 days a week, giving support, information & advice at local level to individual service users and small groups, enabling them to work towards personal development goals.

**Forum Facilitator for Scotland**

(Re-advertisement, previous applicants need not re-apply)

**16 hours per week starting salary £18,600 pro rata of 35 hrs.**

Closing date for applications 19 April 2002  
 Interviews to be held in Glasgow 29 April 2002

**Forum Facilitator for Central England**

(covering Glos. Warks. Oxon. Berks. Bucks. Beds. Herts. Northants)

**16 hours per week starting salary £18,600 pro rata of 35 hrs.**

Closing date for applications 19 April 2002  
 Interviews to be held in Banbury on 2 May 2002

Both these Forum Facilitator posts involve working from home to support Leonard Cheshire service users come together in groups to influence services & support individuals in their involvement. You will have had experience of outreach & working with disabled people in groups.

Application packs: Administrator, Leonard Cheshire Disabled People's Forum, Wyndhams, St Joseph's Place, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1DD. Tel 01380 729954 Fax 01380 721062

**COMMUNITY  
FUND**

Registered Charity No. 218186

**DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**WELFARE TO WORK FOR DISABLED PEOPLE  
Coordinator**

**£23,790 - £27,987 (up to £30,786 through PRP)**  
 subject to evaluation  
 36 hours per week

Ref: 1170

We need an enthusiastic and energetic person to take a lead role in the development, review and implementation of the Bexley Welfare to Work Joint Investment Plan. You will have skills and experience of bringing together groups of disabled people and key agencies to co-ordinate the implementation of the plan, as well as develop and manage specific training and employment projects.

You will be educated to degree level or equivalent professional or management qualification.

This post will be based at Whitehall Centre, Slade Green which is a fully accessible resource centre which actively works to promote equal opportunities.

**For an application package, please telephone 020 8308 4888 (24 hour answerphone), or write to the Personnel & Organisational Development Division, Directorate of Social & Community Services, Room 203, Hill View, Hill View Drive, Welling, Kent DA16 3RY. Please quote the reference number.**

**Closing date: 19 April 2002.**

**Located to the South East of London and within easy reach of the Capital and rural Kent, Bexley is a borough that combines the best of town and country. An innovative approach has underpinned our reputation as an efficient well managed authority with a strong commitment to customer care and employee development.**

**For further information about Bexley, visit our website: <http://www.bexley.gov.uk>**



2001-2002  
Foster Care  
2000-2001  
Dealing with Waste



Committed to equal opportunities in employment and service delivery

**Independent Living Advisor**

This is a full time post (36 hours per week) Salary from £19,000  
 Substantial part time hours may be considered.

You will need to have a good all round knowledge of Disability Issues, with particular reference to Independent Living, together with knowledge of disability benefits. You will be working alongside a small team dealing with Direct Payments.

Personal experience of disability would be an advantage. Applications are particularly welcome from disabled people.

Closing date: **19th April** Interviews: week commencing **29th April**

For further information and application pack please telephone 01895 231677 or write to DASH, H.I.L.C. Royal Lane, Uxbridge, Middx UB8 3QX

Company Ltd By Guarantee (England) Registration No. 4204456

Reg. Charity No. 294045

DASH is a local Hillingdon organisation run by and for Disabled People. In order to continue to develop our services we need a highly motivated person to join our well established Independent Living team

**We are a national disability organisation whose focus is people with cerebral palsy. Our aim is that disabled people achieve equality: a society in which they are as valued and have the same human and civil rights as everyone else.**

**Assistant Press & PR Officer**

Salary: £17,732 (incl. ILW) Hours: 35hrs  
 Location: Market Road, N7

Are you an enthusiastic, highly organised self-starter with strong interpersonal skills? Would you like to work in a busy and creative Press & PR Office?

We seek an Assistant Press & PR Officer to provide administrative and organisational support to the Press and PR team in its work promoting Scope and its activities.

The successful candidate will be required to communicate effectively with journalists, celebrities and Scope colleagues and will need sound admin skills. You will have to be familiar with Microsoft Word, other Windows Software and have an eye for detail. This varied challenging role requires a flexible team player.

If you believe you have the skills and experience for this position telephone Chris Buck on 020 7619 7183 or e-mail [press-pr@scope.org.uk](mailto:press-pr@scope.org.uk). Alternatively write to Press & PR, Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW for an application form and further details.

Closing date for all applications: 5pm Friday 19th April 2002

**We are committed to equal opportunities and we encourage applications from disabled people.**

**Find out more about us on [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)**

Registered charity no 208231

**the TOWER PROJECT**

We are looking for a **DIRECTOR**

PO4 (Scale Points 41 - 44) **£30,363 - £32,493**

Plus Stakeholders Pension Employers Contribution 3%

'We believe everyone has the right to make decisions, to learn about the world and lead independent lives.'

The Tower Project has spent ½ million in the last 5 years on improving access and facilities in this community resource for people with disabilities in East London.

You must have 3 years experience or more as a Senior Manager in the Voluntary/ Statutory Sector and over 5 years experience of working with people with disabilities and want the challenge of running a busy community project. You will need to be a skilled negotiator, have an excellent understanding of financial management and be a good communicator.

To be part of this committed team and develop the project further please send a 45p SAE to: Zoe Portlock (Project Administrator) for a Recruitment Pack

Tower Project, 45 - 55 Whitehorse Road, London E1 OND

Phone: **020 7790 9085** Email: [towerproject@hotmail.com](mailto:towerproject@hotmail.com)

Closing Date: **Monday 15th April at 5pm.** Interview Dates:

**1st and 2nd May 2002.** Commencement of Post: **June 2002.**

The Tower Project is an Equal Opportunities Employer.



putting young people first

**CONSULTANT IN SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION**

Brook London is a voluntary sector organisation providing education and support for young people under 25 around their sexual health.

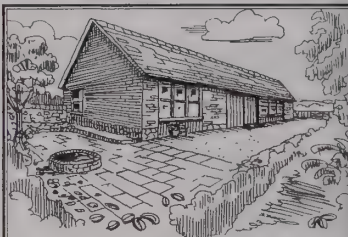
We require a consultant to develop a leaflet and poster series around sexual health and relationships targeting disabled young people. You will be someone who has experience of disability and an understanding of market research methodology.

A total of 70 hours work is available between April and December 2002.

For further information about this post, please send an A4 60p stamped addressed envelope to staffing officer Ruth Temperton, Brook London, 374 Brixton Road LONDON SW9 7AW by 15th April.

Mark the top of your envelope or covering letter 'Developing Sexual Health Work with Disabled Young People 2002'

## • Holidays (cont. see pg 45)

**Take a break at Jay's Barn**

Jay's Barn (sleeps 4) has been specifically designed & rebuilt for disabled people. Beautifully situated in its own grounds/garden. Easy access to Alton Towers, Peak District, The Potteries, or enjoy a visit to one of the level routes in the locality. Open all year. **£150 off peak £230 peak per week.** Also short-term lets. 1 double bedroom, single wheelchair users welcome. Payphone, no smoking, no pets (guide dogs accepted), linen included.

ETB 3\* Category 2 National Access Scheme.

**Ring Christine Babb on 01889 507444.**

Jay's Barn, Bradley in the Moors, near Alton, Staffordshire Moorlands ST10 4DF.

email: [jaysbarn@lineone.net](mailto:jaysbarn@lineone.net)

**ALGARVE - PORTUGAL**

Lots of villas, farmhouses, bungalows, hotels, B&B, car hire with hand controls, adapted vans and plenty to see and do. Contact: David Player  
 Tel: 00 351 289 393636  
 Fax: 00 351 289 397448 E-mail: [dave@player.pt](mailto:dave@player.pt)

[www.player.pt](http://www.player.pt)

**ODDICOMBE HALL HOTEL**

Provides an excellent holiday for the disabled person and their family. We have full disabled facilities and are able to cater for organised parties. All wheelchair accessible rooms open on to a private garden with conservatory and have breathtaking sea views. Private car park with unloading at entrance to the hotel. Open all year.

Why not escape and relax at delightful Babbacombe, Torquay? Category 2.

Special 3-4 day breaks Nov-April. Discount for group bookings. Tel: (01803) 313457.

**DERWENTWATER HOTEL**

Set in conservation grounds on the shores of Derwentwater. Award winning hospitality, two adapted ground floor rooms, the perfect Lakeland retreat. [www.derwentwater-hotel.co.uk](http://www.derwentwater-hotel.co.uk)  
 Tel: 017687 72538.

**Near Salisbury**

newly converted stable block self-catering units. Ground floor 1 double/twin bedroom en-suite wheel-in shower. Upstairs 1 double, 1 single, shower room. Open plan kitchen & living room. Patio & shared garden. ETB category 2, 4-star highly commended. Non-smoking. Prices from £195 pw. Available all year. Tel: 01722 349002. e-mail: [mail@old-stables.co.uk](mailto:mail@old-stables.co.uk) [www.old-stables.co.uk](http://www.old-stables.co.uk)

**Algarve Carvoeiro**

Spacious private villa with pool overlooking golf course. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms including wheel-in shower. Totally level throughout. For more information call Debbie Wells on 01277 354313

**FREEDOM OF THE GLEN HOTELS**

Choose from 3 hotels in spectacular lochside settings near Fort William. Enjoy the freedom to select the hotel which sets the right atmosphere for your break. A choice of 10 rooms with disabled facilities, around the loch.

E-mail: [reservations@freedomglen.co.uk](mailto:reservations@freedomglen.co.uk)  
 Tel: 01855 8215821, Fax: 01855 821463

[www.freedomglen.co.uk](http://www.freedomglen.co.uk)

**DEADLINES**

**May 2002 classified deadlines: Booking: 12th April. Copy: 16th April.**



# Look at the difference

If you're looking for an employer that really values you as an individual, congratulations – you've found one. At Barking and Dagenham, we're positive about diversity, because we know our mixture of cultures, ages, levels of ability and gender actually strengthens our team. And by reflecting the makeup of our community, we'll be better able to provide sensitive, relevant and accessible services to meet its needs.

This year we won the Local Government Chronicle Award for 'Management Team of the Year' and were commended for 'Education Team of the Year'. Our Social Services have improved dramatically and

we are developing innovative partnerships with the local Health Authority. Our schools are amongst the fastest improving in the Country. We are at the heart of the Thames Gateway regeneration project. These achievements are just the beginning, as we continue to strive for excellence, working with our community and strategic partners.

We're regularly recruiting across the board. To find out more about us and the roles we have on offer, visit us at [www.lbdd.gov.uk](http://www.lbdd.gov.uk). Opportunities to join us are also advertised in local, national or trade press, as well as at local job centres.

The London Borough of  
**Barking & Dagenham** Promoting equal opportunities  
and celebrating diversity

## • Holidays (cont. see pg 46)

**NAISH HOLIDAY VILLAGE:** Cliff-top park with "excellent" status. New Milton, Hampshire. Excellent site facilities within 100 yards, with indoor/outdoor pools, restaurant, bar, take-away. Fully equipped, two bedroom fully wheelchair accessible, log cabin accommodation. Sleeps 6. Well furnished. Free club membership.

**GRANGE COURT HOLIDAY VILLAGE:** Park with "good" status, Goodrington Sands, Devon. Excellent site facilities within short walk, with indoor/outdoor pools, restaurant, bar, take-away. Fully equipped, 2 bedroom, fully wheelchair accessible mobile home. Sleeps 4-6, well appointed. Free club membership. (Purchased with funds from the National Lottery).

**MILLENDREATH HOLIDAY VILLAGE:** Excellent seaside site with good facilities, just outside Looe in Cornwall. Restaurant, clubhouse, indoor pool. Fully equipped and wheelchair accessible 2 bedroom chalet accommodation. Sleeps 6 – well furnished and comfortable.

Details: Mr P Cash, tel: (01425) 672055 Bournemouth Spina Bifida Association. Registered Charity No. 261914.

## Newlands Country House, Suffolk

Purpose built grade 1 wheelchair accessible suites, 4 diamonds. All rooms en-suite, tv. Ample carparking, large garden. For details tel: 01502 722164. [www.newlandssouthwold.com](http://www.newlandssouthwold.com) email: [newlandssouthwold@lycos.co.uk](mailto:newlandssouthwold@lycos.co.uk)

## SIDMOUTH Devon

Detached Victorian Old Pump House for 2 people. Newly converted for wheelchair user plus abled bodied partner. (level 2 disability). Bed-sitting-room, small kitchen, wheel-in shower Ref. 123 The Old Pump House 01395 512130.

## PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL "Holiday Care Award Winners"

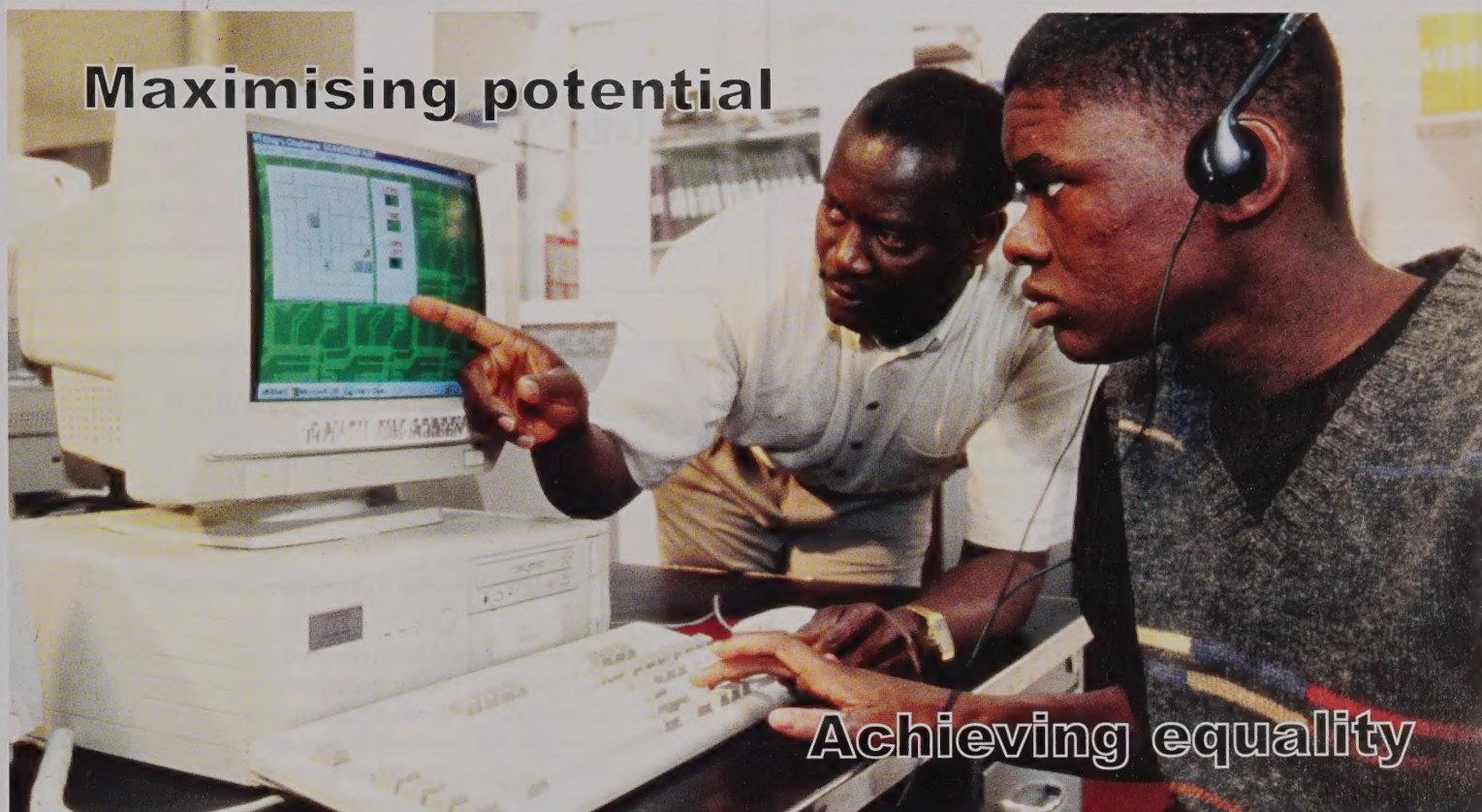
Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service.

Please ring or write for colour brochure.  
**R&N Hall, Penrose Burden,**  
St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall  
PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin  
(01208) 850277 or 850617

## COURSES

To advertise your vacancies or courses please contact Richard, tel: 020 7619 7336, or Patrick, tel: 020 7619 7320, or contact them both on fax: 020 7619 7331, minicom: 020 7619 7332. They can go on the web as well!

## Maximising potential



Achieving equality

## Director of Human Resources

Excellent salary and benefits

London

**Scope** – Our aim is that disabled people achieve equality. A range of strategic outcomes, for the next five years, show we intend to deliver. We provide support to children and their families in the early years of life, in their education and to adults as they move into employment. We also support disabled people in the challenges they face in living day to day. We achieve this through direct support services and by campaigning and public policy work. We have a turnover of c.£95 million and nationwide have 3500 employees and 14000 volunteers.

**Culture** – An organisation that engages with and is driven by our users and members, we are developing a set of values: respect, responsibility, integrity and innovation. These are designed to ensure that we recognise our people as the key to success. To complement this we now intend to develop critical and precise business processes. For HR this means adding value.

**Role** – Provide and facilitate the means by which we can create, maintain and deploy skilled, motivated and valued people to give their best. We have changed the basis of

HR delivery and profile, realigning it with the major areas of strategic delivery. You will direct HR strategy and ensure that the delivery of HR support is effective and efficient.

The role includes wider involvement in the management of the organisation as a member of the Executive Management Board that reports through the Chief Executive to our elected Trustees.

**Candidate** – You will demonstrate a commitment to Scope's aim and values. A team player comfortable with matrix working, distance management, ambiguity and the political dimensions of a membership based organisation. Drive, commercial skills and sensitivity are prerequisites. You can clearly evidence a record of success in innovation and creativity of approach and will be an advanced management thinker. A capacity to consistently create and maintain vision, embrace change and new ways of working is paramount. You have led a high level function in a substantial and diverse organisation, or have equivalent management and professional experience.

CD or e-mail packs from [sue.stewart@scope.org.uk](mailto:sue.stewart@scope.org.uk)

Please quote reference: MJF.

Closing date: 17th April.

Scope is a national disability organisation whose focus is people with cerebral palsy. Our aim is that disabled people achieve equality.

[www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

**SCOPE**  
FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY  
1952-2002  
FIFTY YEARS



• **Recruitment (on pages 42 to 46)**

# Whizz-kidz

THE MOVEMENT FOR NON-MOBILE CHILDREN

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE MANAGER**

Full time (job share may be considered)  
Salary Scale £18k - £24k depending upon experience

WK improves the quality of life of disabled children and young people in the UK through the provision of customised mobility equipment such as wheelchairs and tricycles. It is dedicated to providing help and advice to children and their families and raising awareness of mobility-related issues through national campaigning.

An experienced, motivated, innovative and self-directed manager is required to develop the work of Whizz-Kidz alongside the recipients of the charity. The post involves managing the user group, the Kidz Board and related activities and also developing the children and young people to become ambassadors and spokespeople for the charity's cause and fundraising activities.

Although based at HQ, the post holder will need to be able to travel about the UK (to develop representation), work out of hours and on some week-ends. A person with an interest in disability issues relating to children and young people and an interest in developing this function in the charity (and themselves) is required. Good IT, database, communication and interpersonal skills are needed and the post holder will be able to relate to children, young people and adults from all walks of life.

For further information, please contact **020 7233 6600** or email [j.matheson@whizz-kidz.org.uk](mailto:j.matheson@whizz-kidz.org.uk) for a job description in the first instance. Booked informal visits are welcome and further information is also available. Closing date **April 10th** and interviews will be held on April 24th in London.

COMMITTED TO ACHIEVING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT  
Reg. Charity No. 802872

## Reclaim

a well established organisation that helps adults with disabilities to find and keep work is looking for staff to deliver an innovative ESF funded project across the East Midlands.

Positions available are:

**A PROJECT MANAGER** (salary range £20,000 - £25,000)

**PERSONAL ADVISERS** (salary range (£14,000 - £18,000)

**ADMINISTRATOR** (£14,000 - £18,000)

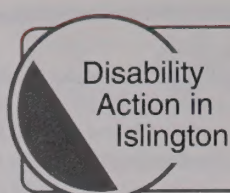
and full/part time **SUPPORT WORKERS** (£12,000 - £14,000 pro rata)

These jobs are especially suitable for people who have a disability or who have experience of working with the employment problems of people who have disabilities.

If you think you might have the vital blend of skill, experience and attitude, to succeed in any of these positions

Tel: Yes2Work on **0808 144 7080** or e-mail [ttw@yes2work.org.uk](mailto:ttw@yes2work.org.uk) for an application form and job details.

Closing date is 10am on **Wed 3 April**. Interviews on 11th and 12th April.



Disability  
Action in  
Islington

wishes to appoint a disabled person as:  
**Training Co-ordinator**  
Salary : S02 (£24,141) pro rata for 21 hrs p.wk.

DAI is a user led disability organisation with a proven track record in providing a range of services that enable disabled people to gain more choice and control in their lives.

We are seeking a disabled person to set up, design and deliver our 'Access for All' project. The 2 year project, funded by the Community Fund, will provide peer disability training to enable 20 disabled people to become accredited and skilled Disability Equality Trainers. The project will also provide disability training to local voluntary and community groups. You will be an experienced trainer with a thorough understanding of disability equality issues and a proven commitment to equality of opportunity.

Closing date for applications: Friday 26th April 2002.  
For further details and an application pack (also available in large print, e-mail, tape, Braille and disk) contact:

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Disability Action in Islington  
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Minicom: 020 7359 1891  
Email: [daii@compuserve.com](mailto:daii@compuserve.com)



Promoting Equal Rights For Disabled People

## DISABILITY WEST MIDLANDS

### Network Development Officer (Part Time)

Regional Disability Network (West Midlands)

**Network Development Officer required to oversee the development of the newly established regional disability network. Disability West Midlands is the accountable organisation on the steering group of this exciting project, funded by Regional Action West Midlands. It is essential that the post holder has personal experience of disability. Working arrangements may be negotiable. Initially funded until 31st March 2003.**

Salary: £20,364 pro rata – 30 hours a week

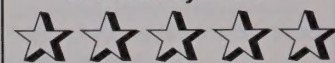
For details please contact our office on:-  
Tel 0121 414 1616 Textphone 0121 414 1188

**Closing date 8th April 2002**

DWM is an Equal Opportunities Employer

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Beautifully equipped, Tourist Board 3 stars with Disability Award 2.  
1 double, 1 twin, both ensuite. Situated on a working croft amid lovely scenery with wildlife park close by. Moray Firth dolphins, kites, buzzards, deer etc, and our Nessie! Inverness offers good food, cinema, theatre etc.  
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## Unequal opportunities employer?



### Help us break through the barriers

Our client Breakthrough UK Ltd., aims to remove the barriers and discriminatory practices of modern life that often disadvantage disabled people from taking control of their futures, their work and their decisions. Run in the main by disabled people, Breakthrough UK Ltd. offers work related training programmes and support to

disabled people and their employers.

And through services that meet "The Social Model of Disability" and "The Principles of Independent Living" they show how disabled people play a full part in our communities. To help achieve their ideals, they now require the following enthusiastic individual.

### BUSINESS MANAGER

With a committed management team behind you, you will offer the leadership required to further develop the reputation of Breakthrough UK Ltd. as a major centre of excellence. Following the framework set by our Board of Directors, and reporting directly to the CEO, you will successfully manage the people, processes and structures necessary for the efficient running of the company. You will be responsible for safeguarding the company's premises and assets and you will quickly gain an accurate overview of the context in which the company operates locally, nationally and internationally.

Salary c. £27,000pa + benefits

If you have the drive and determination to create a real breakthrough, please send a letter and CV requesting which format you wish to receive the information in, to our retained consultant:

**Ray Qudos at Recruitment Source, Churchgate House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M16EU.**

Tel: 0161 238 8656 Fax: 0161 236 4160

E-mail: [info@recruitmentsource.com](mailto:info@recruitmentsource.com)

Minicom: 0161 237 4205

Closing date: 22nd April 2002





# RIDING HIGH

**H**ere's another chance to snap up some tickets for one of the UK's best-loved theme parks. To coincide with the opening of Chessington World of Adventures this month, we're giving away family tickets (2 adults 2 children or 1 adult and 3 children, worth £63) to five fun loving readers. At the big parks, each new season seems to bring bigger and better attractions and in 2002, Chessington is no exception. Get set for a family flight on the new bat-tastic Vampire. On this batty coaster ride, you'll be swinging through the skies and across the treetops with you legs dangling "screamingly" free. Then it's on to the Tomb Blaster to experience an all-new interactive adventure ride. Armed with your laser guns and plenty of courage, you'll journey through the tomb of terror to face hidden dangers and do battle with its scuttling scarabs and coiling cobras! Next, for menace apprentices and mini minxes, Dennis's Madhouse is the perfect ground spot to enjoy training practice on a grand scale.

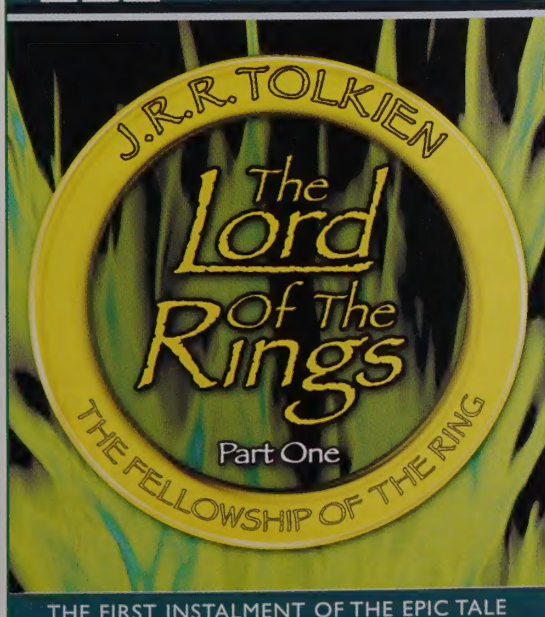


NB For info on all the attractions, access for disabled people and ticket prices, call 0870 4447777 or visit [www.chessington.com](http://www.chessington.com)



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**to enter** Tick your chosen competition circle(s) below, add your details, and send FOR FREE to *Disability Now*, Freepost WD4323, London N7 9BR, or you can fax it on 020 7619 7331, or e-mail the details to: [editor@disabilitynow.org.uk](mailto:editor@disabilitynow.org.uk)

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New equipment, pots and plants; a preview of Chelsea and other events; advice from experienced gardeners – it's all in DN's annual gardening feature

### THE WONDER YEARS?

Young disabled people tell it like it is

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